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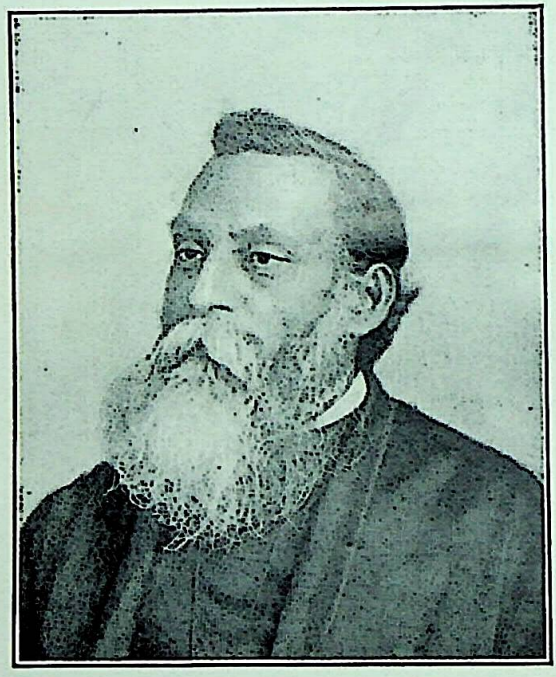

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THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF KESHUB CHUNDER SEN.

BY

P. C. MOZOOMDAR.

THIRD EDITION

NABABIDHAN TRUST
28, NEW ROAD, ALIPORE
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1931.

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শ্রীউমাশঙ্কর সরকার

TO

All Theists,

IN WHATEVER LAND OR NATION, WHO OUT-GROWING THE INFLUENCE OF OLD CREEDS, HAVE INCREASING FAITH IN THE SUPREME GOD,

THE LIFE OF THE UNIVERSE,

THE ALL-FATHER, THE ALL-PERVADING EVER-ACTIVE PRESENCE, ACCESSIBLE AND RESPONSIVE TO EVERY MAN IN DIRECT COMMUNION, WHO WAIT FOR THE ADVENT OF AN ALL-EMBRACING NEW DISPENSATION OF THE SPIRIT, WHO BELIEVE IN THE UNITY OF ALL TRUTH AND ALL HUMANITY IN A UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD,

This work on the Life and Teachings of Minister Keshub Chunder Sen

IS LOVINGLY INSCRIBED.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

It is impossible for me to realise that Keshub Chunder Sen has ceased to live. Impenetrable to this aching eye of flesh, the veil behind which his glorious face is hidden is a semi-transparent veil, penetrable to the faithful spirit that longs to be united with him night and day. So vivid and intense is the image of his presence somewhere very near, in the bosom of that Infinite Father communion with Whom is my daily rest, that every unsatisfied aspiration, shared with him, makes its appeal to Keshub, every sorrow, such as he suffered, seeks his silent sympathy, every trial, such as he bore, waits for strength and endurance upon his glowing example. His influences suffuse this luminous atmosphere of thought, goodness, worship, wisdom. The abounding spirituality of the Church of modern Theism is fragrant with the incense of his pure, profound life. I have sometimes seen thousands of our Indian roses, beaded by the morning dew, light up long-stretching fields in the gloom before daybreak. But scarcely did the first sun-gleam glance on the fairy scene, when lo! every rose had disappeared, gathered and hidden away in the folds of the reapers' robes. Yet though the flowers had changed places, their sweet aroma scented sky and land, till the next morning's roses appeared again, adding beauty to beauty, and sweetness to sweetness. Keshub's life-scenes presented such a garden of real romance. Every morning they were blooming, fragrant, fresh; his words; his works; his prayers, all alike. Who that knew him, loved him, was with him to the end, can deny the truth of this? Hidden away by the hand of the Great Reaper in the folds of the Eternal, Keshub's influences permeate everything good and pure both in as well as out of the Brahmo Somaj. As his life-long friend and follower, it has been my attempt to gather these influences with a reverent hand in the following pages.

Keshub Chunder Sen rose to his eminence from insufficient beginnings. The germs of genius were undoubtedly in him from the earliest years. But the circumstances which called forth his powers were such as happened to thousands of others around him. As a relative and companion, always living within a few feet of his residence, I have, from childhood, watched him in every trial and incident of life. Far from losing by this constant familiarity and vigilance the

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accumulated remembrances of decades have but ceaselessly added to the wonderful development of his life. Keshub Chunder Sen was the embodiment of a great internal force. It upraised his character, like some stupendous edifice, ascending tier above tier, till the heights were lost in mystic communion with the Spirit of God. In boyhood it showed itself in his intellect, in youth it fired him with a fierce asceticism, in early manhood it took the form of restless enthusiasm for every species of reform; and later on the same force converted itself into that unique spirituality so unfamiliar in the present age. The harmony of these various manifestations of force formed the whole secret of his life. The facts and laws of this harmonious development, it is to be wished, were treated by other hands, by some one who studied them from a greater distance than myself. Let us hope this will be on some future day. But just now his often expressed wish, as well as my own, forces that sacred duty on me. A heavy sense of responsibility weighs upon me. How shall I give expression to the complicated workings, the ceaseless many-sided growth, the universal sweep of that transcendent spirit? Perhaps no single individual can record or count its myriad out-goings. I have only tried to utter what I have long felt and thought on the subject. A sense of inadequacy and unfitness haunts me; I can but honestly say I have tried to do my best. Writing in a foreign tongue, before the judgment-seat of the present generation, and all posterity; writing wihout any help except that of the blessed Indwelling Spirit, with watchful unfriendly criticism alert on all sides, I must, so far as I may deserve it, throw myself upon the protection of public indulgence. My humble object has been to describe my friend as I have always known him, concealing nothing, nor setting down aught in malice. How far I have succeeded in this is not for me to say. Keshub has materially lightened my work by delivering, only two years before his death, a series of fifteen autobiographic sermons under the title of *Jeevan Veda* (The Scriptures of Life). From these as well as from his other writings, I have drawn most largely. And as he seldom said or wrote anything that did not indirectly bear upon his own life, he has himself furnished the most valuable materials of his biography. But more than anything else, I rely upon what I have known, seen, and heard in my constant companionship. His teachings on various subjects are so extensive that another big volume would be

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wanted to give them in anything like completeness. I have tried only to give the barest summary of what he taught on the most important subjects, dwelling somewhat more fully upon his later utterances.

My duty would have been most easy if the enthusiasm of universal sympathy which followed him for the greater part of his brief career had lasted to the end. But as heavy mists in autumn suddenly rise from the deep Himalayan valley, and crawling up to the heavens, swallow the glories of the mountain scenery, so towards his closing years, evil reports and unfavourable representations somewhat dimmed the lustre of his great name. The hand of death has done much to disperse the gloom, but by some law the mists show a tendency to return again and again. Time and truth will surely beat them back in the end. If notwithstanding there be some shadows still left by the lights upon the heights of that colossal character, his humanity shall be all the more real for that. Keshub Chunder Sen never claimed to be a messiah, a mediator, or a prophet. He proclaimed his sinfulness before vast assemblies. But he was unique in one thing. He consistently claimed to be the Minister and Leader of the Brahmo Somaj. He claimed this to be his mission. He consistently professed to see the face, and hear the voice of the Living God. Of course, it was only as spirit can see and hear the Spirit. But thus he discovered realities, and developed possibilities, which no other man in his age or generation had done. These attainments took in his mind the concrete form of a New Religion, a New Dispensation. That was his message to mankind. He latterly felt that his discovery was in advance of the times; but that he had anticipated and prefigured the faith of the future he had not an atom of doubt. Time will test the truth of his forecast. Amidst the endless activities of illustrating the principles of this august discovery, his lamp went out too soon. We, his faithful followers, devoutly accept his gospel, and hope by Divine grace to carry on his work. Our faith is firm that he works and prays with us from the mansions of the blessed where he has ascended, that his hallowed influences fill us in our attempts to be like him, and that in life, death, and eternity, our relations to him, and to each other, are inseparable in God.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE rapid sale of the first edition of the Life and Teachings of Keshub Chunder Sen has been an agreeable surprise. When I was trying to bring out the book three years ago, publishers of note discouraged me. Only a strong sense of duty overruled the warnings. For one thousand copies of an expensive work to be consumed in a little over eighteen months is an uncommon experience in India. I can explain it by nothing but the marvellous influence which Keshub Chunder Sen, though no more with us, still exercises on the minds of his countrymen. The demand for the book is as great as ever, and, remembering who are the readers that value it, I feel it a duty to bring out a second edition at a more convenient price.

The criticisms of the Indian Press have been unexceptionally flattering. Indeed, I never had any reason to expect such kindness. My critics agree in saying that I have made no attempt to conceal or gloss over the apparent limitations of my honored friend. No, I have not. My endeavour has been above all things to be truthful and just. Keshub Chunder Sen needs no flattery; his greatness can very well take care of the few singularities for which, justly or unjustly, men found fault with him. But in India we are still in that primitive stage of public criticism which predicates either absolute perfection, or total depravity. Between unmitigated deification, and unmerited vilification there is not an inch of halting ground where our poor mixed human nature may find a fig-leaf of shelter. I know Keshub scorned all exaggerated praise, that he was often victimised to it, that he respected manly criticism, even when very uncomplimentary. I have tried to write his biography in his own spirit, and I am thankful that the Press in general have accorded to me their unqualified confidence. If I am mistaken in any one of my estimates or statements, mine is an honest mistake, and Keshub's genius will surely survive it; if I am not mistaken, the lights and shadows of my humble picture, I feel assured, will bring out his noble character in simpler and more natural proportions than any amount of mere wild unthinking praise.

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

PEACE COTTAGE,
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5 Dec., 1930.

আমি, শ্রীমতি সৌদামিনী মজুমদার, আমার স্বামী স্বর্গস্থ প্রতাপচন্দ্র মজুমদার প্রণীত নিম্নলিখিত পুস্তকখানি ছাপাইবার ও বিক্রয় করিবার অধিকার নববিধান ট্রষ্টের অন্তর্গত "প্রতাপচন্দ্র স্মৃতি ভাণ্ডারকে" দিলাম। অন্যের ইহাতে কোন অধিকার থাকিবে না। তাঁহারা যত শীঘ্র পারেন ছাপাইবেন।

1. LIFE & TEACHINGS OF KESHUB CH. SEN.

G. C. Banerjee. শ্রীসৌদামিনী মজুমদার।
Ganesh Prosad.

The sincerest thanks of the Nababidhan Trust are due to Sreemati Soudamini Mozoomdar (Mrs. P. C. Mozoomdar) for this kind gift of her, and the Trust feels highly gratified in being able to bring out this new edition of the Life and Teachings of Keshub Chunder Sen, the Minister of the Church of the New Dispensation, written by Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, the Interpreter of the same denomination.

A few additions and alterations have been made herein. For the new illustrations (photos) Prof. Niranjan Neogy, M.A. of the Brotherhood has to be thanked for kindly lending the use of blocks prepared for the "Apostles of the Nababidhan." Thanks are also offered to others who have rendered help in the publication.

For faults and defects, pardon is craved from the readers by the present publisher.

15th August, 1931,
28, NEW ROAD, ALIPORE,
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SATYENDRA NATH SEN,
Hony. Secretary,
Nababidhan Trust.

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INTRODUCTION.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN AND HIS TIMES.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN's character, viewed in contrast with his contemporaries in Europe and America, will not be understood. It was formed amidst environment of an entirely different kind. His greatness can be only realised by contrast with the state of society in which he was born. He belonged to the second generation of English-educated Hindus in Bengal. The Hindu College was established in 1817, but the first generation of English-educated men preceded the era of colleges and schools, and consisted of such characters as Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833), Raja Radhakanta Deb, and Keshub's own grandfather, Dewan Ram Kamal Sen. They were sound, substantial, self-made men, uncrammed, untitled, without much mechanical finish about their intellectual outfit; but with indigenous home-spun faculties, definite religious impressions, and a sturdy backbone to their character. They were few numerically, they had fought their way to knowledge and distinction through enormous difficulties, and their influence was not immediately transmitted to their successors. The next generation of men might be looked upon as the first-fruits of English education in the land. They were of a different type. The very touch of European knowledge affected their ancestral orthodoxy, and succeeding batches of graduates came out of the Hindu College with their idolatrous faith completely bleached out of them. The educationists of the time, men like Macaulay, Bentinck, and Trevelyan, congratulated themselves on this result, they did not perceive at the time that the loss of Hindu orthodoxy meant the obliteration of every sense of religion. And thus with their healthy Hindu intelligence sicklied over with a pale cast of Western light, too faint to guide them in their path, those young men were unfastened from the safe anchorage of social customs with the authority of centuries of time-honoured tradition at their bottom. They drifted away yearly in great numbers to every species of radical doubt and moral irregularity, they were emasculated, goddied, and more or less denationalized. Enthusiastic Christian Missionaries, official philanthropists, and immature ethnic

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INTRODUCTION.

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philosophers of all kinds, looked with complacence for the approaching or actual downfall of caste. "Idolatry," they said, "was doomed." And so indeed it was. But no one gave a moment's reflection to the question whether the doom of caste and idolatry would not at the same time mean the doom of the fine old national character. We have all heard of the extravagances of the race of young Hindu reformers that sat at the feet of Derozio, the Eurasian Byron, who led our fathers and great uncles captive by his erratic genius, and nonchalant self-indulgence. We have all heard of the fatherly philanthropy, and reputed infidelity of David Hare, the pioneer of English education in Calcutta. These were the creators of the first generation of educated Bengalis. But the salt had not altogether lost its savour, and the first generation whose prominent representative was perhaps the late Ram Gopal Ghose, retained some trace of the original vigour of the Hindu mind. But when Keshub Chunder Sen turned out of college in 1858, and we also about the same time, Hindu society in Bengal presented a chaos. The indications of mental irregularity to which we have just alluded, became pronounced and unmistakable. The type of character known as "Young Bengal," to whom Keshub dedicated his first tract in 1860,* was fully developed. Strong tendencies of a violent social transition had set in. What was known as education comprised a slight acquaintance with the idioms of the English language made through an uncritical study of the writings of a number of British authors, mostly belonging to the previous centuries. Shakespeare and Milton, held in a sort of conventional repute, were indeed extensively taught in the schools. One great test of superior education lay in the young man's readiness to quote with great show of self-importance from Hamlet and Paradise Lost; Johnson's *Rasselas* and *Rambler* were read with intense admiration; Addison's *Spectator* was always the *sine quâ non* of good education; Goldsmith was the favourite poet, and Pope's verses were learnt by heart. Those who were philosophically inclined, now and then studied Smith's *Moral Sentiments*, and some even went so far as *Bacon's Essays*. Considerable value was attached to English composition, and he who could fluently speak or write in that language was looked upon as a sort of prodigy. The writer of a newspaper article had great reputation in his neighbourhood. Bengali versification was most abundantly

Essays; Ethical and Theological.

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practised on every imaginable subject, one or two men even attempted stanzas of English doggerel, but most people were modestly content with as much literature as sufficed for a monthly income of fifty or a hundred rupees. There was no enthusiasm for any public life. Perhaps an aspirant after political celebrity delivered a set speech at a literary club, a great number of which began to crop up in the native quarters of Calcutta. Perhaps an eccentric character joined the Brahmo Somaj, more for the free eating than the practice of religion there. Perhaps, some enterprising youth would go and become a convert to Christianity. But, as a rule, education, except in rare instances, neither stimulated the intellect to originality, nor influenced the heart to profound impulse. On the other hand, with increasing knowledge, there was an increasing progress of secret self-indulgence; scepticism had extensively infected the rising generation, and strict morality was ceasing to have any hold on Young Bengal. Every one conversant with the history of early education in Bengal knows of the celebrated controversy between the advocates of Oriental and European learning. It terminated with the famous decree of Lord William Bentinck in 1835, whereby the object of the British Government was declared to be "the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone." No doubt the decision of the British Government was wise and far-seeing. But one very unsatisfactory result of the almost exclusive study of a foreign language, and that the language of the dominant race, was the total neglect of the vernaculars of the land. The industrious student of Shakespeare and Milton in the Hindu College could scarcely spell his name in his own mother-tongue. The Anglicists undoubtedly overshot their mark when Lord Macaulay, as their mouthpiece, declared with his fatal facility for exaggeration, that "a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic, held in such supreme reverence but a few years before, as the only source of wisdom, were in consequence of such teachings looked upon with unconcealed contempt. They were barbarous, unwholesome, unfashionable. Dr. Duff somewhat thoughtlessly characterized "the ocean of Oriental literature" by quoting Ferdusi's satire on the Court of Ghuzni. "The magnificent Court of Ghuzni is a sea, and a sea without bottom and without shore. I have fished in it long, but have found

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no pearl." Our young men took advantage of his sage counsel by fishing for pearls in Scott's and Fielding's novels, and the wide unclean waters of other inferior works of English fiction. For History, especially for Indian history, they had an unnamable horror, and as for science they had a notion that the Germans were the people that had something to do with that sort of thing. Englishmen of genius or original research, who came out to the country, moved in the upper spheres of official and social existence, their speculations and good-feelings seldom percolated through the race-barriers into centres of Native life. When a philanthropic scholar like Horace Hayman Wilson took interest in an intelligent Hindu like Ram Kamal Sen, the friendly relation produced the most important consequences, but somehow or other in the subsequent generations of educated Hindus in Calcutta, either such enlightened Englishmen ceased to come out, or ceased to take sufficient interest in the moral and intellectual progress of their native fellow-subjects. The result of all this was the rearing up of a superficial race of smatterers, who dealt in the merest platitudes of the English tongue. In Keshub's early days these men monopolized the title of educated Hindus. But we must not be too severe upon our own generation. Perhaps even such education was not without its leven for the mass of society. Perhaps what the quantity of direct knowledge failed to do, the quality of indirect influence, exercised by a superior race, effected. The establishment of debating clubs in different quarters of Calcutta, dating from the foundation of the Bethune Society in 1851, created a great ferment amongst bodies of young students. Political associations, then in their embryo, arose out of such organizations, one or two English newspapers edited by Hindus began to rear their heads, a good many Bengali newspapers kept the air warm with their perpetual vilifications of each other. Bands of young men, who had lost their faith in the orthodox religion of the land, met to discuss religion, and now and then assailed the superstitious notions and practices of their older neighbours with truculent zeal. All these things worked together to cause deep disturbance in the huge mass of native society. Acquaintance with English authors, contact with European and semi-European teachers inflamed the minds of young men, and set them free from the restraining influences of all wholesome prejudice. The reaction was soon apparent. Our fathers had been for some time mentally convinced of the unsoundness of orthodox usages, their sons wanted to cast aside altogether every restric-

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tion, to eat and drink and live as they chose. The Christian Missionaries, the State officials, the youthful journalists, the unfledged reformers, all united to raise a war-cry against caste, and the entire population of our colleges and schools joined the crusade. It meant the introduction of the European luxuries of food and drink, the free-and-easy ways of the West, the abolition of social discipline, of the exactions of *Brahman* priests, and impecunious relatives. Excessive indulgence in the use of alcoholic liquors characterised the educated community; concommitant vices showed themselves, and premature mortality began to rage amongst the rising generation. The emancipation of women began to be talked about, and here and there the doors of the zenana were flung open. Men, before they had learnt to honour the gentler sex, felt a trenchant desire to be introduced into the company of the female relations of their neighbours. Third-rate English novels illustrated the questionable benefits of such promiscuous communion. All notions of moral danger, promulgated by Hindu teachers of former times, were set aside as old-fashioned and pernicious. Impurity of character among the educated became proverbial. Philosophers of the sceptical and Agnostic school, scientific opponents of religion and morality, the apostles of Utilitarianism, the materialistic professors of nescience, and so-called Positivism, overspread the land with their teachings. In every shape, in books, magazines, newspapers, through men who filled public posts, and some of whom even occupied chairs in our colleges, these teachings found their way among young men. The ancient scriptures of the country, the famous records of the spiritual experiences of the great men of numerous Hindu sects, had long since been discredited. The *Vedas* and *Upanishads* were sealed books. All that we knew of the immortal *Mahabharat*, *Ramayana*, of the *Bhagvata*, and *Gita*, was from the execrable translations into popular Bengali which no respectable young man was supposed to read. The whole religious literature of ancient India presented an endless void. Our young reformers studied Payne's "Age of Reason" to get fresh ideas on the subject of religion. Theodore Parker was just beginning to be known, and his writings were valued more for their caustic denunciation of orthodox Christianity, than for any positive inculcation of Theism. For one man who came to embrace Christianity, or joined the Brahmo Somaj, ten expressed their wholesale defiance of all religion. While, on the other hand, an equally large number, for considerations of prudence and wordly gain, stuck to professions

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and practices of ancestral idolatry, without a particle of real faith in the observances which they publicly held as sacred. Drunkenness and debauchery of the latest European fashions, became associated with great religious festivals of orthodox Hinduism. English officials and merchants attended the dances of native courtezans on such occasions. All faith in morality and religion every day became weaker, and tended to decay. The advancing tide of a very mixed civilization, with as much evil as good in it, the flood of fashionable carnality, threatened to carry everything before it. Even amongst our limited circle of friends and relatives, we often counted hopelesss victims to intemperance and profligacy. There were some good men, both amongst Europeans and Hindus, who deplored this strange transition from extreme stagnation to head-long self-indulgence. The former were too unfamiliar with native society to resist the tide, and the latter were too effete. The character of the rising generation of Hindus was threatened with utter ruin. The Christian Missionaries with Dr. Alexander Duff* at their head, were no doubt energetic and philanthropic men ; why did they not step into the breach? They did what they could. They philosophised, sermonised, journalised, and established schools. But their own Trinitarian orthodoxy was so bigoted, their teachings were so intimately akin to the exploded farrago of Hindu dogmatism, their intolerance was so excessive, so unsympathetic, their denunciations of the national religion were so violent and sweeping, that as religious men and reformers they shared very nearly the same criticism which fell to the lot of the less enlightened apostles of native faith. The Serampore Missionaries introduced the printing-press into Bengal, their college was a model institution, they translated the Bible into the vernaculars, they spread moral influences around them, but their influences were unduly circumscribed by their theology, and could neither penetrate upwards to the higher and lettered classes, nor downwards to the humble and illiterate masses. And what is worse, neither the missionaries nor their converts showed any inclination to protest against the tide of corrupt civilised self-indulgence which upset the character of the rising generation. One of the newspapers of the time characterized Dr. Duff's pupils, as well as other free-and-easy young men of the time as "cutting their way through ham and beef, and wading their way to liberalism through tumblers of beer." The prince of Hindu converts, the late

Vide George Smith's *Life of Dr. Duff.*

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Dr. K. M. Banerjea, a little before he was baptized, got with his friends into serious difficulty through some of these habits. We extract the passage from Mr. George Smith's life of Dr. Alexander Duff :—

"If there be anything on which a genuine Hindu is taught from his earliest infancy to look with absolute abhorrence, it is the flesh of the bovine species. If there be anything which, of itself singly, must at once degrade a man from his caste, it is the known participation of that kind of food. Authentic instances are recorded, wherein a *Brahmin,* violently seized by a Moslem, has had such meat forced into his mouth, and though deprived of voluntary agency as much as the veriest automaton, the contamination of the touch, was held so incapable of ablution, that the hapless, helpless, unwilling victim of intolerance, has been actually sunk along with his posterity for ever into the wretched condition of outcast. Well, in order to furnish the most emphatic proof to each other of their mastery over prejudice, and of their contempt of the ordinances of Hinduism, these friends of liberty had some pieces of roasted meat, believed to be beef, brought from the bazar into the private chamber of the *Inquirer* (the paper edited by K. M. Banerjea.) Having freely gratified their curiosity and taste with the unlawful and unhallowed food, some portion still remained, which was thrown in heedless and reckless levity into the compound, or inner court of the adjoining house, occupied by a holy *Brahmin* amid shouts of 'There is beef! There is beef!' The sacerdotal master of the dwelling, aroused by the ominous sound, and exasperated at the unpardonable outrage which, he soon found, had been committed upon his feelings and his faith, instantly rushed with his domestics to the quarter whence it proceeded, and under the influence of rage and horror, taking the law into his own hands, he violently assaulted the *Inquirer* and his friends." As for the *Brahmo Somaj* it had not very long ago emerged out of its original *Vedantism,* and about the time we are speaking of, the internal conflicts between the leader Babu Devendra Nath Tagore and his colleagues, raged so high that they well nigh threatened the demolition of the whole movement. The controversy was on the fundamental questions of Divine existence and attributes. The *Brahmo Somaj* of the time exercised a very considerable influence in shaping the destiny of the generation. Though its creed being a classical monotheism, and the founder being a man of recognized genius, a good number of respectable men showed sympathy for it, yet the Hindu scriptures with

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which the *Somaj* exclusively dealt at the time were very little studied, and the society did not at all distinguish itself by any attempt to check the revolutionary moral tendencies before alluded to. It was a respectable, intelligent, obscure body whom the orthodox had ceased to regard with much concern, and as a social, moral, and spiritual factor in the community, it counted for very little. The orthodox pointed the finger of scorn at the freedom of food and drink in the *Brahmo Somaj*. For the *Brahmos*, like the rest of their country-men, held latitudinarian views on these subjects, though in other matters they were held to be upright and reputable men. Not to speak of their internal discords, the *Brahmo Somaj* had to carry on a double warfare, on the one hand with the aggressive Christian Missionaries who wanted to argue them into Trinitarianism, and on the other hand with the bigoted idolatrous *Pandits* who incessantly struggled to overthrow the movement of Raja Ram Mohan Roy.* No standards of social reform had yet been set up in the *Brahmo Somaj*. The members weekly attended a semi-vedantic service, and then went home to live like orthodox idolatrous Hindus. Babu Devendra Nath Tagore never directly joined any idolatrous observance, but at the time of the great *Durga Pujah* festivals, left the family house, and went on tours. No ethical or spiritual developments, no compact fraternal organizations had yet dawned upon the *Brahmo Somaj*, the leader was barely able to establish a covenant of corporate membership, an elementary form of Theistic creed, and a promise of daily worship, "unless disabled by disease or danger." Babu Devendra Nath Tagore, however, strained his efforts to impart to the institution such cohesion as would suffice to prolong its existence amidst the destructive agencies operating on all sides. The little community had achieved some eminence in the controversial literature of the day, its services towards the development of the vernacular of the province were most notable, it had started on almost a new footing some of the scientific speculations of the West, and begun some highly important translations both from Sanskrit and English. But as a social and spiritual force that would sway the destinies of the nation, the *Brahmo Somaj* did not only not manifest, but did not possess any indication of a revolutionary vitality.

Such then is a brief sketch of social conditions to which

*The Founder of the *Brahmo Somaj*.

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Keshub Chunder Sen was born. As he grew, finished his education, and entered into public life, every one of these destructive tendencies became more pronounced, and gained in power. To sum up these tendencies the social system of caste had suffered all but absolute disruption in Bengal, the ascendancy of Hinduism as a religion was only nominal. Elderly guardians who had, in their own early days, imbibed the taste for the incoming civilization, and received the seeds of social unsettlement, had outwardly joined the ranks of the conservatives, and insisted on the forms of ancient usage being observed by their children. But the young men were every day becoming more and more loud in their insubordination to domestic and sacerdotal authority. The *Brahman* felt his day of glory gone. He had made endless concessions, he was still manufacturing compromises to suit the lawless spirit of the times. Intemperate drinking, and licentiousness of thought, taste, and character, were fearfully rampant. Infidelity, indifference to religion, and point-blank atheism were unblushingly professed. Education had generated, or never developed into anything higher than a frivolous pursuit of rhetoric and dilettantism. Female education had just commenced, and men began to talk of bringing their wives out of doors. Just a glimpse of public spirit loomed in some obscure literary society, or embryo political association, or some essay, or speech of an aspirant after cheap reputation. The Christian Missionary now and then unbent himself, and showed an inclination to fraternise with the educated Native. The *Brahmo Somaj* manifested a sporadic anxiety to induce the younger generation to join its ranks. Society was ripe for further change and development. Amidst such an environment of pregnant circumstances, Keshub Chunder Sen sprang into public life, like a young lion, full of fierce enthusiasm. Only about two years before his death, he thus spoke of himself, "If I ask thee, O Self, in what creed wast thou baptized in early life? The self answers, in the baptism of fire. I am a worshipper of the religion of fire, I am partial to the doctrine of enthusiasm. To me a state of being on fire is the state of salvation. * * My heart palpitates as soon as I perceive any coldness in my life. When the body becomes cold, it is death, when religion becomes cold, it is death also. It may take time to know whether I am a sinner or not, but it is easy to know whether I am alive or dead; I, at once, decide this by finding whether I am warm or cold. I live in the midst of fire, I love, embrace, and exalt fire. Every sign of heat

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fills me with joy, hope, zeal. As soon as I feel the fire is losing its heat, I feel as if I would jump into the sea, and drown myself. When I find that a man after five years of enthusiasm is getting to be lukewarm, I at once conclude he is on the highway to a sinful life, that before long death will tread on his neck. I have always felt a cold condition to be a state of impurity. Coldness and hell have always been the same to my mind. Around my own life, around the society in which I lived, I always kept burning the flame of enthusiasm. When I succeeded in serving one body of men, I always sought another body whom I might serve. When I successfully worked in one department of life, I always sighed to work in other departments also. When I gathered truths from one set of scriptures, I have longed for others, and before finishing these I have looked out for others again, lest anything should become old or cold to me. This is my life that I am continually after new ideas, new acquirements, and new enjoyments.'"*

Thus Keshub's strivings were infinite. Every social, moral, religious want in himself and others, appealed to him. His ambition was to serve every community, all men and women. He lived in the midst of an inextinguishable furnace of aspiration, the heat of which he carried into everything he did. He set fire to whatever he touched. His reforms knew no end; the progress he demanded was restless and ceaseless. Nothing declined in him, everything grew. He wanted to change the very face of the earth. His orations and sermons inflamed vast assemblies in this as well as other countries. His devotions and prayers made great congregations shed tears and sob like children. His undertakings drew sympathy from every known and unexpected quarter. Whatever he did hundreds, thousands of men did. When he walked in procession through the streets, barefooted and bareheaded, as a common devotee, hundreds threw off shame and fear, and joined him. Every one naturally responded to him, every one did his best for him, not a few abandoned all the prospects and emoluments of life for his sake. Dozens of young men, with all the instincts of self-indulgence fully developed by the materializing tendencies of the times, turned devotees, mendicants, and ascetics, by the power of his example. But nothing satisfied Keshub. He still wanted more life, more fire, more devotedness; he was insatiable in the hunger of his demands

Jeevan Veda, Chap. III.

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on himself and others. A strange fire consumed his being, and every one could feel it who approached him in the intimate relations of life. The fire melted his innermost metal, and incessantly moulded it into fresh ideals. These ideals readily passed into various kinds of activities and reforms which magnetised the whole land and nation. The entire society of the *Brahmo Somaj* was exceedingly fervid in his time. His disciples were distinguished not so much by intellect as by an ever active emotion, by an intense enthusiasm the best impulses of their nature kept always aglow. He developed ever new occupations for them, he never suffered them to take repose. Hence the reforms and adventures of every description which Keshub originated, were innumerable. They never retained the same outward shape or activity for a long time, and thus, perhaps, there was an element of impermanence in them. But the principles themselves were everlasting, and came out in an endless multitude of fresh conceptions and embodiments, every one of which was alive with his fervid genius. Some of these activities will be described in the following pages, it is necessary here to indicate the main directions which characterized them.

Keshub's chief aspiration was to perfect the elementary theism of the *Brahmo Somaj* into a regular religious system which should take its place by the side of the great religious dispensations of the world, and harmonise them all into the faith of the future. He wanted to introduce into it the utmost scientific precision with every possible development of spirituality. By nature supremely intellectual, he was imbued with the philosophical spirit of the age to a degree which left no doubt in his mind that a religious system with any pretension to be universal, should on no account dare to trespass the limits and conditions of human knowledge. But the horizon of that knowledge had been in his own case so far enlarged by the vision of a God-touched spirit, of an uncommon wonderful faith, that latterly he was absorbed in the one occupation of perfecting the spiritual instincts of his people. He felt sure the age would furnish the necessary scientific culture, it was always there; but him we could not have always; and while he was with the *Brahmo Somaj*, he wanted to lead it in the unfrequented pathways of inspiration and faith. Some of his methods have been objected to. It would be premature, were it not needless, to defend mere methods. But when the cloud of all this ephemeral misrepresentation has blown away, and motives are seen in their

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true light, it will be easy to find out that Keshub suited his plans to the place, and time, and people among whom he lived, that his genius was far higher and greater than any forms, methods, or means he felt it necessary to adopt in order to bring home the truth of his great doctrine to his fellowmen. In his own heart God had revealed the symmetry of a Dispensation that was absolutely new in its harmonies, new in its force, spirit, and meaning; and he laboured, he strained every power and gift of his nature, to establish it outside. The principal means by which he wished to accomplish this work was by founding a model community. He wanted, he incessantly laboured to embody the new religion in an apostolic community of reformed men and women. This he looked upon as his highest work. Allusion has been already made to the magnetism of his character. In very early life he influenced his boyish companions to a life of unselfish ends. When a young man he forced other young men to a life of enthusiasm and aspiration. And when he developed into a religious leader, his great aim was to train up a number of devoted men and women into the model of a divine household and apostolical community. Such was his idea of a church. He wanted to permeate this body fully with his ideas; he wanted to make it entirely one with himself. They were poor, simple, unknown, but he loved them more than any one, or anything. He was never happy without them, they were never happy without him. He was their minister, leader, their guardian, teacher, and centre. They were his apostles, disciples, colleagues, sympathizers, supporters, and friends. He tried to develop them into a church, into a neighbourhood, into a happy family, into the lasting and great memorial of his work. Since his death they have shown signs of hopeless disunion. If they are ever able to unite, as he wanted them to unite, his spirit shall remain, his best work shall last on earth. All his characteristic teachings and foundations had their practical reference to such a body. The teachings shall stand recorded, and the foundations shall find a place in history, but their real meaning shall be gone, if Keshub's apostolic organisation loses its integrity. He tried to preserve that integrity by great moral rigour. A remarkable feature of his character was what, in spite of repeated remonstrances, he insisted upon calling "Asceticism."* "When I entered the world," says he, " it was as if I entered the

**Jeevan Veda,* Chap. IV.

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graveyard. God had appointed that the garden of pleasure will be unto me like the abode of death. The Heavenly Painter drew the background of my life in the deepest black. Sorrow, repentance, renunciation formed the first chapter of my religious experience. In my eighteenth year religious impulses dawned upon me, but I had left off eating all animal food when I was fourteen. When religious feelings grew in me, and I began to pray, the cloud which at first was no bigger than a man's finger in the sky of my life, became very deep, so deep that my face partook of its darkness, and my heart was full of sadness. I had neither peace in the day-time, nor rest in my bed at night. To Pleasure I said, 'thou art Satan.' To Love of the World I said, 'thou art hell, those who touch thee fall into the jaws of death.' To my body I said, 'thou art the path to perdition, I will conquer thee.' " This early melancholy of his life has been described elsewhere. In later life he was most joyful, serene, loving, and universally loved. But often and again the old shadows returned, and enveloped and overshadowed his motives; he repeatedly took shelter under that primitive austerity, he cultivated it, and embodied it in his institutions. This he called the doctrine of Asceticism. To keep off the approaching indications of worldliness, and love of sin from his little community, he sternly preached this doctrine, he cooked his own meals, and subsisted upon alms at intervals, he now and then dressed like the mendicants and *fakirs*. When the necessity for such practices ceased, he reverted to the ordinary ways of life: but none could fail to observe that though the practices were suspended, the principle was always active in his character. A stoical, self-denying rigour was the backbone of Keshub's religious genius; it was the bias and direction of nature in him; it was the tyranny of inherited tendencies which never let go their hold upon his temperament. It is to be feared that amidst his apparent prosperity during the latter years, this habitual predominance of ascetic professions and practices contributed not a little to his unpopularity, nay that they aggravated his illness, and hastened his death.

Prayer to God was another early instinct in Keshub. It was entirely untaught: from the very beginning it was a spontaneous impulse. He never saw any one offer prayer to the unseen Spirit God; his mother, or any of his friends never spoke to him on the subject. He could not be very much more than fifteen years when he first began to pray.

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But a dogged persistency in the habit characterised him even then, for he was persecuted for it. It may be safely said that in the first ten years of his religious life prayer scarcely brought him any sentimental consolation, though no doubt it strengthened him morally. But nevertheless he prayed regularly, incessantly, mechanically against the promptings of the world. "The first lesson of the scriptures of my life," says he, "is prayer. No one helped me then; and I had not entered any religious society; I had not decided what faith to adopt. Neither any devotee, nor any community of worshippers associated with me then, but in that morning of spiritual life, the voice always sounded in my ears, 'Pray! Pray! there is no other way than prayer.' I never knew why and for what I should pray, that was not the time to reason, there was none whom I could ask, nor did any one advise me to offer prayers. It never once occurred to me that I might be mistaken in my impulse. 'Offer prayers, thou shalt be saved, thy character shall change, all thy wants shall be removed'—this promise sounded from the east and west of my life, from the north and the south. I knew only One, with One only I conversed, I had no other friend. I looked up to the sky, but heard of no divine dispensation, no gospel of any known religion reached me. I never took thought whether I should repair to the Christian Church, to the Mahomedan *Masjid*, or the Hindu *Devalaya*. From the first I had recourse to that supplication before God which is greater than *Veda*, or *Vedanta*, *Koran*, or *Puran*. I offered one prayer in the morning and one in the evening, both of which I had written out. All that was dark before began to clear up, objects around were distinctly seen, and by the practice of prayer I gained an endless, resistless strength, the strength of a lion."* Here then is a reality of religious life that cannot be put away. Here is the example of a man who, from the small beginnings of a simple natural prayerfulness, gradually found in himself the growth of a spiritual life, whose magnitude has overshadowed the whole land, if not the whole world. Keshub Chunder Sen bears the grand testimony of undoubted heroism, and the loftiest harmonies of soul, all attained by the easy accessible means of earnest prayer before the God of love. Everything great or good which he achieved, he ascribes directly or indirectly to prayer. The history of the development of his spirituality is therefore

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a study of unsurpassed interest. It is the corner-stone of his whole system of religion, the whole fabric of his beneficent activity. Keshub Chunder Sen's life has produced one great result, it is this. He has undoubtedly taught a number of men the reality of daily intercourse with the Spirit of God. The formless essence of the Divine Being and attributes he has embodied in a living, heartfelt worship which has truly regenerated some men. The invisible God he has made visible to his disciples. If other works which he tried to accomplish fail, this shall remain as the stateliest memorial to his character as a God-sent Minister and Apostle of mankind.

Such characteristic spiritual culture, it need scarcely be said, pre-supposed a large capacity of faith, and Keshub's faith constituted another singular feature of his mind. Faith dominated within him to a degree which sometimes caused his reason to be called into question. "If any one," he says, "hears a voice that is not his own, it may be called a spirit-voice, or a ghost. From the beginning of my religious life, many times have I heard this voice both within my heart and outside, yet I have never held it to be ghostly or super-natural." On every emergency of life, whenever he needed it, he believed he heard this voice. "Whenever, and as often as I have heard the voice of this unseen living Person, I have known it not to be the voice of any friend, of mother, father, wife, nor of my own self, not to be the teaching of any book, nor a past experience flashing suddenly in the light of memory, nor the painted delusion of the goddess of fancy. But God has Himself spoken to me either to leave some favourite sin, or to begin some good and holy undertaking, to destroy some evil, or take up arms against some pernicious usage, and I have always done so. I have reasoned, struggled and taken means to silence this voice, but I could not. I have a soul, and I have certain sentiments in it ; God too has the same. I have certain resolves ; He too has His resolves. One is the creature soul, the other is the Supreme Soul. The two are separate. To the substantive *soul*, two adjectives are applied—creature and supreme. The creature-soul speaks in the man, the Supreme Soul too speaks in the creature-soul. To distinguish the two personalities is to many a matter of much difficult culture."* To illustrate this he says in another chapter of *Jeevan Veda*.† "Never be anxious before you begin

**Jeevan Veda*, Chap. VI. †*Jeevan Veda*, Chap. X.

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an undertaking, never be anxious after you have commenced it. Never be anxious before or after, or in the middle. Do not give way to anxiety at any time. Act under the word of God, and never be anxious." "Whenever I have felt it my duty to build a house, I at once began to build. The walls rose up to the sky, the construction was finished, the pictures were put up, and then last of all I began to lay the foundations (that is, provided the expenses). Have I got to give a daughter in marriage? The date is fixed. At the right moment the marriage takes place. There is no hitch. But at the outset there was neither the necessary money, nor the person known to whom the daughter was to be given; both came in due time; and the servant of God was enabled to do his appointed duty." This strange unfamiliar motive, always disguised under the most impenetrable reserve, broke out again and again in the details of domestic and personal conduct in ways that gave an appearance of provoking eccentricity to much that he did. No one could form any reliable anticipation as to how Keshub would act under critical circumstances, nay, nor could Keshub himself make any such forecast before the trial came. When it did come, his strong unwavering faith decided the whole question, and then neither violence, nor flattery, neither reasoning, nor danger could move him by a hair-breadth. He took a long time to ascertain the right course of conduct, he waited patiently, he listened with his ear to the heart; he was always sure the right decision would come. And when he felt it came, he lost no time to act upon it with fierce and fanatic enthusiasm. Interpreted by this principle, many of his most incomprehensible acts become as clear as noonday. Criticism is disarmed before a man of such unique faith, and the most unreflecting feel an instinctive fear to pronounce hasty judgments upon his conduct. He fully expected his motives would be misapprehended, and he thus speaks about it. "Whenever it is felt that a certain course of conduct would be praised by all men, the devotee at once suspects there must be something wrong in it. Whenever it is felt that a certain other kind of conduct would be repudiated by all, would invite indignity, would cause separation even from friends, would weaken the body, injure the mind, whenever all this is felt, the spirit at once decides that to be the right course of conduct."* The fact is Keshub put exceedingly little im-

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portance upon men's opinions. He was very conciliating, he was very mild, but he never submitted to human guidance; when opposed, he was immovable as a rock. Keshub had the independence of a hero. He had a profound scorn to be subjected to any man, or to any institution. "God has implanted in my heart great hatred against subjection. Subjection to man is sin, it is the source of all evil, it is enmity to God. I never reflected on the consequences of this principle but at once accepted it in the beginning. I have suffered a great deal on account of it, but I have never left it. Men say, follow your preceptor. I have felt afraid to do so. To follow parents, or friends, or those related in the bonds of religious fellowship there is the same fear against it all. Even those who are peculiarly intimate with me, who aid me in every good work, and are active in my cause, do not find me subservient. I will never be enslaved by the love of any friend."* To one thing did he profess and practise subjection, that was the will of the Supreme Soul whose voice he believed he constantly heard in his own soul. The distinctions between the creature will and the Supreme Will have puzzled theologians and devotees in all ages. The subject was to Keshub, like so many other subjects, not a matter of culture, but of perception. He had some secret instinct by which he discovered the deliverance of the Spirit, and he never wavered to carry it out. The influence, that is to say, the imitation of such a principle led to the growth of a spirit of independence among his followers which was fatal to every kind of corporate organisation. The men could never be brought to loyal subordination to each other in any work which required the surrender of self-will. No department of the various reforms inaugurated by Keshub, in which the independence of the individual workers was interfered with, could flourish. He noticed this unexpected difficulty, and deplored it repeatedly. He made various attempts, held numberless conferences to remedy it, but all to no purpose. Now in his absence it has well-nigh exterminated his work, and is making an incessant havoc upon every organisation he has left behind. During his latter years, he must have apprehended what is now taking place. He says "If I fail to perpetuate any organisation, if I do not retain a single follower, I will submit to that rather than make any man my slave, seeing that I am slave to none.

**Jeevan Veda,* Chap. V.

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If there are fifty different men in my community, they are of fifty different minds. Truth is my witness, the sun and moon are my witnesses, there is no subjection in my society, every man who has joined me is his own master. Every one will have to acknowledge this while I am here, every one will have to acknowledge this when I am gone. I have asked no man to accept me as his *guru* (guide) or governor. I know God to be the only Guide and Governor."* Such a doctrine reduced to practical results would be the direct inspiration of every individual, and the whole community, by the Spirit of God. That was in short the idea Keshub Chunder Sen had of an apostolical organisation. As far as possible he worked his church on this principle. It is fortunate that what was known as his inspiration was generally accepted by his immediate followers to be the will of God, at all events they acquiesced in it. But Keshub did not necessarily accept what they claimed as their inspiration, nor did the followers recognise each other's inspiration. So long as Keshub was alive, the seeds of these differences, though they often grew, did not threaten a crisis. As soon as he was removed, they broke out in a form subversive of all good feeling, and all mutual relationship. How in the midst of so much that was explosive and dangerous Keshub worked for nineteen years is a mystery, but the fact remains that all the independence and waywardness in his disciples only contributed to his wonderful success. "I see," says he, "that everything I wanted whether in regard to myself, or in regard to the country, or the world and mankind at large, was given me. What it took other men to wait for very long, so that their body and mind were spent in the waiting, we have obtained by our ordinary efforts, and ordinary strength. I have often heard it said there are great delays before we get results, sometimes we never get them. We reap our harvests in the future world, here we only sow seeds. But I see now it takes five years to accomplish the work of twenty-five years, it takes only one hour to do what used to be done in twenty-four. The tree that used to bear its fruits in many years' time, is now fruitful in a very short interval. In the name of God our work commenced, before two years were over the results were great, vast numbers of men came. What was there twenty-five years ago, what is there to-day, who knew, who ever imagined this to be possible! Between

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religion and religion what conflicts were there before; how great the inclinations of men to sin; how feeble was the religion of the *Brahmo Somaj*; how great the want of love to God and man; how deep the absence of enthusiasm among the weak inhabitants of Bengal. After the continued labour of ten or twenty years the preservation and propagation of truth became quite practicable. In that country where many noble achievements are turned into dust, behold the religion of the *Brahmo Somaj* is transformed into the New Dispensation. There has not been a year without progress. There has not been a month, or a week, or a day when God has slumbered in our midst. What undertaking was there in relation to the New Dispensation which has not been crowned with success? What act has not brought forth its fruit? Great works have been established; small works which were begun in the name of God, have also become successful. Now I can look up to the Sun of truth, thrust my arm into the fire of truth, and declare that what I wanted to obtain I have obtained, what I wanted to see I have beheld."* It may be said by Keshub's critics that this success was a personal success, and lasted only during his lifetime. But no one can deny that amidst very serious difficulties he demonstrated the *possibility* of such success. Men of his greatness come to the world to point out possibilities which it takes generations to make actual.

A striking back-ground to these brilliant qualities is presented by the singular modesty of Keshub's character. No less than four chapters out of the sixteen that compose the beautiful autobiography from which we have been quoting, elucidate one side or another of this characteristic virtue of meekness. Every one who knew him, even casually, must bear testimony that he was the opposite of a bold, pushing, self-confident man. His enthusiasm, his activities, the power of his faith and devotions, the sense of his great mission, the consciousness of his pre-eminent position in the *Brahmo Somaj* made him fearless. But outside the limits of his inspiration, thrown back upon his own nature, he was shy, backward, diffident, timid, full of the sense of his personal unworthiness. He not only acknowledged the superior gifts and position of other men, but, incredible as it may seem, hesitated to approach them even as an equal. Always calm and self-possessed, within the depth of his majestic presence, underneath the shadow of his colossal

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reputation, he carefully concealed this maiden-like modesty, so that few, but the closest observers, could detect it. But at home, among his intimate companions, he never tired of expressing his dread of the rich and learned, of the officials and aristocrats, and his relief when delivered from their company. He said he had on such occasions to go through a scene of solemn hypocrisy, keeping up a dignified exterior spread over a palpitating heart. He speaks about it with the simplest candour. "This life has been enslaved to fear and shame for a long time. I have not willingly or with pleasure welcomed such fear and shame as my masters. I know they are inimical to the character of good and pious men. But whether it be for want of religious culture, or whether it be owing to natural weakness, I have not been able to get rid of the shame and fear of men. God has driven such feelings out of the ground of religion in my case, but suffered them to remain in the ground of the world. When I find a company of very learned men, I do not feel the confidence to enter there. My mind says "this is a place to honour the wise and erudite, you have no right to enter here." And a similar feeling gets possession of me when I am in the company of the wealthy or the distinguished. My difficulty is to approach men of three classes, the wealthy, the famous, and the learned. It is only because duty compels that I venture to go at all, it is because duty compels that I venture to make speeches before them. In foreign lands, or at home, when I am alone, I feel helpless and unprotected. My heart says such a man as I ought never to be alone."* A whole chapter, the fourteenth, in the Jeevan Veda is devoted to what Keshub calls the recognition of his caste. "O my soul," he asks, "what is thy caste? Art thou the child of the rich or the poor, coming from the line of the opulent, or the humble? After much investigation, after twenty-five years of close thought, I conclude that my feelings, tastes, and motives, that my blood and brains all belong to the order of the poor. My daily habits bear abundant testimony to that poverty. After being tried in many tribunals (of self-examination) I have come to recognise myself as one of the poor. I was reared by a wealthy father and grandfather, I was surrounded by comfort and luxury of every kind, but as I grew up in years the signs of natural poverty began to show themselves in my character. Very simple food yields me satisfaction, I love simple rice and

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herbs. If I have to travel by railway, I like to go into the third class. Whenever I find poverty I find rest, and the full security of life. I have not learnt this poverty by any effort, it has found its way into my character by natural laws. Whether men understand it or not, I have understood it aright that my spirit is the spirit of the poor, and my body is the body of the humble." It was indeed difficult for men to understand this. Keshub's true character was so overlaid with the brilliance and predominance of genius; outward circumstances of ease and honour so disguised it; a lofty estimate of his mission and place in the *Brahmo Somaj*, a natural and deliberate reticence so overshadowed it, that few men could recognize his "caste of poverty." Now that he himself has made the avowal, those who knew him best would at once recognise in his saying some of their profoundest experiences of his ways. Undoubtedly Keshub had great native refinement, he had a due regard of his position as the leader of a powerful movement, of the position also of his family, of his relations with the civilised European and Hindu communities around, nor was he wanting in a high self-consciousness of which enough has been said elsewhere. His sense of poverty never interfered with all that, but it secretly moulded and perfected that personal character which presented to his followers such a model of moral and spiritual fulness. It produced that beauty, sweetness, reasonableness, imitableness, in which the simplest and humblest of mankind beheld their own kindred. It presented that agreeable contrast of virtues, that reconciliation of opposite attainments, that strong light and deep shade which the true leaders of mankind possess. Some men see one phase, some men see another phase of such many-sided characters, and there is much blind controversy among the successors of the great man. An occasional glimpse of the completeness of his character, however, cures the deficiency of vision, and gives rest to the heart.

The desire of harmony became a positive passion with Keshub towards his latter years. This was the ruling principle of his religious character, this was the ruling principle of the New Dispensation. It was the secret of all his endeavours, all his developments, apparently so incoherent. He could never be contented, he judged it a positive sin to possess only one side, and pass by other sides of human perfection. In his heart he reconciled all religions, all prophets, all scriptures, all disciplines. The creed of the New Dispensation was only the outer emblem of his inner attainment. He aimed at, and

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struggled for the wholeness of spirituality. "I am continually advancing towards perfection," says he. "I have left sectional religion, my heart has yearned to advance towards perfection. I cannot confine myself within partial progress. For the good of our mother-land, the New Dispensation, which God has vouchsafed, means the fulness of harmony. For a long time have I wished to do away with fragmentary piety. God is the perfection of all attributes. His love is infinite harmony. His passionlessness and His joy are equally perfect. Not so my own character. When my asceticism increases, my joy becomes comparatively less. I see God more in one thing than in another, more in one part of creation than in another, more in the saint than in the sinner. You want to enjoy the love of God which Chaitanya preached, but cannot be happy with the holiness of Christ Jesus. You can give place in your heart to Gauranga, but cannot feel the same honour for Gautama, or perhaps you feel disinclined to give due recognition to the Aryan *Rishis* and *Munis* of ancient India. Such sectional religion can no longer satisfy me. Detached sentiments I indulged in at former times, but I have now tied up a great nosegay of all truths in my soul. I have repentance one day, and good work on another; to-day asceticism, to-morrow joy; to-day the enthusiasm of youth, to-morrow the wisdom of age. Jesus, Moses, and all the prophets reign in my heart hand in hand. He Who has always been at the root of my being, has strung together all the jewels, and hung around my neck the precious necklace. At one moment I enjoy the beauty of this world, at the next moment the beauty of heaven. Heaven and earth have become one to me. All the musical instruments strike together one celestial harmony. Now we want perfection." *

Thus Keshub's life was like an unfathomable music. Its many-voiced sweetness, its stupendous reality, its harmony of a hundred ideals, its ever-growing height and depth, had the gift of infinity in them. A negative infinite always moved his scorn. He held, worshipped, and taught the Infinite Positive. The soul of prophecy and poetry both was in him. He could not only behold, but he could utter, and though his utterance was inadequate to express his vision, yet it went forth as a song, as a glory, as an unnamable influence, deep into every soul, deep calling unto deep. His life had the heavenly magic of making the true beautiful, and the beautiful

Jeevan Veda, Chap. XII.

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true. Both the truth and the beauty lay in his goodness. He was completely good, good in every relation, strong in his goodness, fearless and confident like a child, never vain in his success, never downcast in his failures. All religions found in him their congenial elements, all scriptures their expounder, all prophets their disciple. It seemed as if he could speak the language of a hundred spheres, and partake of the sacraments of a hundred communions. Every description of devotee found in him a fellow-devotee, Hindus, Moslems, and Christians alike. Every sinner, every sorrow-stricken soul found in him the curing consolation that comes of kindred experience. The joyful found in him abundant perennial joyfulness, the pure-minded came from him with a brighter flame of purity, only the wicked, evil-disposed, and unbelieving found him fearful like a sword. Women who flocked into his company, found him exceedingly womanly, and to children, of whom he was very fond, he was ever child-like. The harmony of a higher world was in him. His complicated, many-sided perfection made it difficult to comprehend him. He was sound and whole to the very core, and he "made the earth wholesome" to those who were around him. We have tried to describe what the land and the people were when Keshub entered into public life, let us reflect on the state of society now that he has gone away from us. Higher aspirations of spirituality have been kindled throughout the country. Every religion has caught fire in India, every community scintillates with life. The course of an imperfect foreign civilization, borrowed at second-hand from sources unworthy to represent it, has been arrested. There is a pronounced re-action against Western vices. Education has deepened in its tone, widened in its scope, and there is a perceptible effort to connect religion and ethics with it. A strong sense of national individuality is being reared up on a basis of national religion. A deep and strong enthusiasm has been infused into the moral nature of the rising generation. A large majority of them have embraced the simple principles of a universal Theism, which is capable of innumerable developments on all sides. Social reforms of every kind have profoundly changed Hindu society; elevated the condition of women, loosened, and nearly broken up the distinctions of caste, immense classes of men have been delivered from superstition and priestly despotism. Every good seed now bears its tree in the country. A great many reformers have risen of whom Keshub Chunder Sen was the pioneer. The youth of the land teem with fiery enthusiasm of which he

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kindled the first flame. An impatience of social impurity and wrong characterises the generation, he gave the first impetus to such feelings. The nation abounds in orators, of whom he was the father and the model. All denominations are full of missionary activity which he originated. He influenced the land and nation in more ways than can be counted. But of course, nowhere are the effects of his life and labours more definitely perceptible than in the *Brahmo Somaj*. When he entered it he found in it a few elementary particles of uncertain Deism: he left it a most highly organised religion, with far-reaching doctrines, with a catholic culture that embraces the discoveries and developments of every faith and communion. He found it a barren rock which scarcely yielded to any one the living water of spiritual life, and upon which no practical reforms of any kind could grow. He left it a great fruitful field, producing social reforms without number, the golden harvests of the intellect, of unsurpassed devotions, and mature religious character. He found it an abode of dry rationalism, nearly devoid of all personal religion. He left it full of every form of faith and spirituality, full of devoted men and women ready to die for their faith. When he entered the *Brahmo Somaj*, all that it possessed in the shape of scriptures was a fragment of *Vedantic* teaching. He left to it the legacy of the scriptures of all nations. He found in it the absence of any personal centre—an absence of prophets and holy examples that hold mankind together. He left it a populous pantheon in which the holy and good of all religions are congregated—the great saints and sages of ancient India, the prophets and seers of India and Arabia, the best and holiest of all lands culminating in the blessed everlasting Son of God. He found the *Brahmo Somaj* in hostile array to Christianity, and the missionaries of Christendom. He left it full of invaluable sympathy cordially tendered by leading Christian thinkers and ministers, by some of the greatest men of Christian lands. The fame of the *Brahmo Somaj* now rings nearly all through Asia, Europe, and America. He found the *Brahmo Somaj* a frail human organisation; he left it a great Divine Dispensation, whose future involves the spiritual future of mankind.

But can any passing introduction like this unfold Keshub Chunder Sen's genius? That genius was complicated, profound, restless, God-inspired. It reflected every light, every want, every aspiration of the age. It aimed at removing all darkness, doubt, sorrow. He laboured really, radically to bring

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the kingdom of heaven on earth. He lived in that kingdom in his heart, he wanted to make it a fact in the world. He tried to live like an ideal Hindu devotee, like a mystical Christian saint, and also like a practical European reformer. He laboured to be true to every relation of his many-sided life, as a householder, a minister, a message-bearer of heaven, a subject, citizen, man of the times, as the son and servant of God, establishing new ideals of spiritual culture and attainment. He was an originator and author of things, turning ideas into facts, making the abstract concrete. He was a seer of unseen truths and harmonies in strange phases of life and systems, his heart as broad as human goodness. He was the prophet of better times, of a higher faith, of a purer morality, of a superior humanity. He was an unwearied doer of the right and the true, a ceaseless sower of the good seed, an uncomplaining labourer whose reward came not to him on this earth. He fell in an uncongenial soil, worked amid very depressing environments, worked with inferior instruments. Who is there left behind him that can do his work? The squabbles and quarrels of his successors are without dignity, or promise of peace. Keshub knew very well what was happening in his little Church, and forecast a good deal of the future. But his soul was full of calmness and sweetness. The love of God was with him rest, full of the mystery of strength. With him faith was the profoundest wisdom, and a certainty in every-day life. With him, the presence of God was a ready guidance that sufficed for all the intricacies of a unique life of strange trials, and sufficed for an untimely death of strangely protracted suffering. He lived and died an intense, burning, restless light, which suddenly went down in its fullness and undimmed lustre. And, now that he is gone, in our darkness we feel we knew him not, and gave him not his due.

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TESTIMONIES IN MEMORIAM.

Scarcely had the ashes of Keshub's funeral pyre on the banks of the Ganges become cold, when condolences poured in from all quarters of the globe. Her Imperial Majesty, the Queen-Empress of India*caused a telegram to be sent from London through the Marquis of Ripon, the Governor-General of India, desiring that an expression of Her Majesty's regret at the news of the death of Keshub Chunder Sen should be conveyed to his family, and her condolence with the loss they had sustained. Lord Ripon on his own account wrote a similar letter, saying that the loss of so remarkable a man would be felt throughout India. In fact the loss was not only felt, but realised as a national calamity. From every presidency and province, almost from every city and community, the most sympathetic telegrams and epistles came by the score, expressing the warmest sense of sympathy and sorrow. Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, a high Government officer, in his popular book on "New India," cites the instance of this universal grief to prove that the Indian people were fast growing into a strong national life. Not a few of the daily newspapers came out in black borders, the vernacular journals were specially pathetic in their lamentations. Public meetings of various kinds were held throughout the country, and every section of the great Indian people, both Hindu and Mahomedan, was equally unreserved in the expression of its testimony to his worth and greatness. Religious bodies and eminent men in other countries wrote in a similar strain. It will be interesting to preserve some of these testimonies.

At a great memorial meeting held in the Town Hall of Calcutta on the 30th January, 1884 a very large number of the inhabitants of Calcutta, Hindu, Mahomedan, and European assembled to do honour to his memory. The late Hon'ble J. Gibbs, who officiated as Governor-General for the time, and was appointed President of the Memorial Committee, spoke as follows:—

"I have for many years been deeply interested in that great movement over which the lamented Keshub Chunder Sen so ably and wisely

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presided. I had heard of it before I came to this country, and when quite a child, remember seeing Raja Rammohun Roy, who was a friend of my father's, while for the past 20 years I have personally watched its progress with great interest. The resolution describes the meeting as being one representing all classes of the community, and it is as representing one of those classes that I feel it a duty to be present and bear testimony to the loss which India has sustained by the death of this great religious leader. That his removal is a national loss, the presence of so large a number of gentlemen here this afternoon amply testifies. He was a man who had the real welfare of his countrymen most deeply at heart, and his anxiety for that welfare was not limited by the thoughts of this world, its honours and advantages, but took a far higher range, and while he wished to see his followers good citizens and loyal subjects, he hoped and prayed that when this transitory life has passed away, they might obtain greater and far more enduring benefits in that which is to come. In this he strove, for this he laboured night and day, for this he spent his life, yes, for this he gave up his life for his fellow-countrymen. It is not for me to enquire into or comment on the tenets of his faith, to show how broad a building he raised on the comparatively narrow foundation he found laid by his predecessor, or how near he has approached to Christianity; suffice it to say that what he saw good in that as in other religions, he adopted. To the European mind his language and imagery may have seemed strange and fanciful, those sacred ideas which are so well-known to the dwellers in the West, when dressed in an occidental garb are difficult fully to recognise, and we must not, therefore, criticise them as we would the thoughts and words of a Western teacher. It is enough for us, who had the pleasure of knowing him, who listened to his public utterances, read his writings, and heard his conversation, to feel that he was a great, a good, and an earnest man, whose name will be reverenced for years to come, whose labours will doubtless bear fruit in an increasing ratio year by year.

" "But having sown some generous seed,
Fruitful of further thought and deed,'

And we may comfort ourselves with the assurance

" 'I know that age to age succeeds,
Blowing a notice of tongues and needs,
A dust of systems and of creeds.
I cannot hide that some have striven,
Achieving calm, to whom was given
The joy which mixes man with Heaven.' "

Sir William Hunter, the distinguished scholar and historian, who presided over this meeting, made a most feeling speech. He said:—

"Maharajas, and Gentlemen,—We are met together, to-day, to do honour to the memory of a great man. Some of us have had the privilege of knowing him in more tender and sacred relations, as a religious leader, or as a beloved friend, and the deep sense of personal loss caused by his death has in many ways found fitting expression. But it is neither as his private friends, nor as his spiritual fellows that we are assembled now at this great public meeting. The list of

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gentlemen who desired the Sheriff to convene the meeting, has been published in the newspapers, and has been read by many of you. It consists, as you know, of representative men of all races and creeds; of Englishmen high in the Councils, and in the administration of the Empire, or distinguished at the bar, and on the bench of the Supreme Courts, of Hindus of every caste, from orthodox *Brahmans* and land-holders of ancient noble families, to men of the new lights, and of the most advanced views; of the leaders of the Mahomedan community, of Christian ministers, Protestant and Roman Catholic; of merchants, editors, men of science, and men of the pen. As I read that list, I could not but ask myself what constraining influence was there in my dead friend which sufficed to bring together for common action, a body of men whose views and whose interests lie ordinarily so far apart. Then I remembered a saying of his own :—

"'It is easy to distinguish a great man, but it is difficult to comprehend him.'* It is because we of different races and diverse creeds have distinguished in Keshub Chunder Sen the authentic marks of greatness; because we have recognised in him one of those rare men of simplicity, genius, and power whose life was devoted to the welfare of others, and who is now for ever hallowed by the pathos of an early death, that we are here assembled to do honour to his memory. Keshub Chunder Sen was no anonymous person. His days were spent among us. His unwearied public labours, his charm in social intercourse, his warm affections in all the relations of family life, are well known. There was about him, in private, a certain blameless dignity, not less attractive than his splendid, public eloquence in speech. It was, in truth, a many-sided character, singularly transparent, which disclosed even its weaknesses, its limitations, and self-repressions. The only thing not generally known about Keshub Chunder Sen is the extent of his secret charities. He was born in a position well suited for the part which he was destined to play in life. His grandfather was the friend and coadjutor of Horace Hayman Wilson; and his family combined wealth and a high position among the Hindu community with a genuine love of culture. In his early home all that was best in the old and in the new life of Bengal met. From that common camping-ground of Eastern orthodoxy in life, with Western freedom of thought, he went forth as a young man on a campaign of his own. Others will tell of the sorrows, the persecution, the renunciations of those years; of the hard battles fought; and of the victory over self and the world finally won. My duty in opening a meeting representing in a special degree the East and the West, is confined to pointing out that Keshub Chunder Sen represented, in a special manner, the fusion of European science with Indian thought. In his efforts to reach the intellects and the consciences of his countrymen he employed every vehicle of instruction, from the ancient Bengali drama to the modern leading article. The production of the classical play, the *Bidhava Bibaha Natak*, under the stage managership of the young Keshub Chunder, marks an era not only in the history of the Indian theatre, but in the progress of public opinion on the important question of widow marriage. His tracts for the times, of which the first bore the characteristic title of 'Young Bengal, this is for you'—formed another successful effort to reach the public ear. In his maturer life he employed every modern means which a man of genius and energy can devise for enforcing his spiritual

*"Great Men" (Lectures in India).

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doctrines and his lofty morality upon his countrymen. The newspapers which he founded or with which he identified himself; his missionary tours; his ever active pen; his eloquence in the pulpit and on the platform; his unwearied zeal in teaching all who came to him to learn; these were the weapons with which he daily fought his good fight. Death found him in the midst of his labours; but the concourse at this meeting, and the messages received from many distant lands prove that India and England are alike resolved that his memory shall not be forgotten. Before asking His Excellency, the Hon. Mr. Gibbs, to propose the first resolution, permit me to conclude with a few words in which Keshub Chunder Sen, many years ago, expressed his conception of a great man. 'The peculiar destiny of every great man,' he said, 'is to live and die for one idea. This idea is nothing more than a definite plan of the particular reform needed at the time. Around him he finds society degraded, impoverished, and ruined: within him lies an ideal of what society ought to be—an ideal which constantly seeks to realise and to develope itself. His life is thus a life of continued struggle, which ceases only with his life.'* My friends, the one idea of Keshub Chunder Sen was the advancement of his countrymen to loftier standards of morality, of religion, and of freedom of thought. For that idea he lived, and with that idea he died."

Mr. Justice Cunningham, was not only a distinguished Judge of the High Court of Calcutta, but also an author of considerable renown. He is a son-in-law of the great Lord Lawrence, who was such a staunch friend of Keshub both in India and England. Mr. Cunningham's oration is more philosophical than the others, but we give it as representing a fresh and important point of view.

"I may be permitted to state shortly the grounds on which I think that not only his followers, but the general public may well and fitly signalise his career by some of those external tokens of respect with which grateful society keeps alive the recollection of departed worth. Those causes are to be found in his relation to the country and age in which he lived, and his ability to meet its special wants. He must, indeed, be a dull and unintelligent observer who fails to recognise, in what is now going on in India, one of the most important and interesting intellectual revolutions the world has ever known. Two branches of the great Aryan family have met on the plains of Hindustan, not so far from their common cradle—the one well furnished with the results of Western civilisation, the last discovery of science, the last achievement of art, the last conquest of philosophic induction of critical analysis; the other hard-bound in a vast structure of tradition, custom, and primitive dogma. The fusion of Western knowledge and criticism with an old-world system naturally produced something like a cataclysm of belief. Physical science assails many parts of the old creeds as a grotesque or impossible; the student of history impugns them from a second stand-point, the student of morals from a third, the utilitarian from a fourth. There is a general attitude of negation. The Queen's Proclamation enjoined that no one should be molested or disquieted by

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reason of his religious faith; and well have the injunctions been observed; but there has been a process at work opposed to which the mandates of Sovereigns are as powerless as the commands of King Canute to the advancing tide. The stream of modern thought rages and surges about the old religious systems and undermines them. To borrow Mr. Mathew Arnold's simile, the tide of belief, which once flowed, full and strong, on the high shores of the world, is now a remote and languid current, of which we scarcely hear more than a distant murmur. We seem, as has been finally said, like men who 'stand on some dizzy mountain height in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, through which we now and then get glimpses of paths, which may be deceptive. If we stand still we shall be frozen to death. If we take the wrong road we shall be dashed to pieces. We do not certainly know if there be any right one. What must we do?' In such a state of opinion two courses are easy and common. It is easy to accept with alacrity the negative results of criticism, to welcome as unquestionable gain each new conquest of science over established opinion, to discard with contempt the old faiths, and with the old faiths much that belongs to the highest parts of man's emotional nature. It is common and easy, again, to intrench oneself behind this or that dogmatic system, and to fly for refuge to the kindly sheltering wing of religions which dispose of doubt by condemning the doubter, and solve the problems of existence by denouncing every attempt at solution as impiety. It is easy, in fact, to be materialist, and it is easy to be superstitious. But neither materialism nor superstition, nor any alliance of the two, will satisfy the aspirations of our age. If the advance of man's understanding in the paths of knowledge is inexorable, equally inexorable, it has been said by one of the leaders of English thought, 'are the claims of his emotional nature, which the understanding can never satisfy; and, if unsatisfied, the human mind, with the yearning of a pilgrim for his distant home, turns to the mystery from which it has emerged, and seeks so to fashion it as to give unity to thought and faith.' Such a reconciliation if it be possible, is the highest of human achievements, and every attempt at it deserves to be regarded with interest and esteem. Common natures cannot conceive, feeble natures cannot attempt it. The Native of India who, amid the surrounding ruins, has the moral force to conceive a system of pure and refined Deism, which satisfies emotion without insulting reason, who can commend his views to other men, and mark out the path in which they may tread and organise a system for the guidance of their lives, is one of the moving spirits of his age. We live in a tempestuous epoch; whither its wild waves are rushing, to what distant shores, to what unknown oceans, upon what shoals or rocks they may bear us, it is forbidden to human ignorance to guess. It is impossible to ignore the dangers, the anxieties of the position. Meanwhile the man who can realise for himself and help others to realise the conception of a rational, pure and elevating theology is, as it seems to me, among the benefactors of his species, well entitled to be kept in affectionate remembrance, not only by those whom he immediately influenced, or who accept his doctrines in their entirety, but by the generation to whose highest and gravest wants he endeavoured to minister. The man who, unenslaved by superstition, untrammelled by custom or dogma, unbewildered by the blaze of modern discovery, unterrified by doubt can minister to man's spiritual wants is his greatest friend. It is because Babu Keshub Chunder Sen was such a minister and friend, that

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I think those among whom he lived ought to do something to keep his memory alive to other times."

The meeting was addressed by numbers of others from our Hindu, Mahomedan, and Christian fellow-citizens, but none spoke so forcibly and elaborately as the three we have quoted. Maharajah Sir Jotindro Mohun Tagore Bahadur, who is the present head of the orthodox and educated Hindu community, shortly expressed himself to the family thus: "A most remarkable man has passed away from amongst us, and it is my firm conviction that we shall not find the like of him soon. If sorrow shared is sorrow soothed, you have the consolation that the whole community shares in your grief, for all India mourns the loss of one who was great in his goodness, and great in his worth." The *Hindu Patriot*, edited by Kristo Das Pal, who was destined so soon, alas! to follow Keshub into the realm unknown, began an eulogistic article with the words—"A Prince and a great man has fallen."

Professor F. Max Muller's profound knowledge of everything Indian, and his personal interest in the people of this country, and their prospects, are sufficient guarantee of the accuracy of his estimate of the character of Keshub Chunder Sen. He knew Keshub intimately for a long series of years, and what he writes, he writes with the carefulness of a scholar and an antiquarian.

"India has lost her greatest son, Keshub Chunder Sen. His was one of the few names known not only most widely among the two hundred and fifty millions who are said to inhabit the vast Indian Empire, but familiar even to European ears. Many of us saw him during his stay in England in 1870, listened to him, admired and loved him, and not a few have ever since remained united with him by the bonds of a real friendship. If we look around for true greatness, not only in England or Europe, but in the whole civilised world, and if we try to measure such greatness, not by mere success or popularity, but honestly and, so to say, historically, taking into account the character of the work done and the spirit in which it was done, few I believe, would deny that it was given to Keshub Chunder Sen to perform one of the greatest works in our generation, and that he performed it nobly and well. Like all great men, he had warm friends and bitter enemies. He himself was proud of both, and though fully aware of the greatness of the work committed to him, and quite conscious of his own worth and dignity, he far more frequently protested against exaggerated praise than against unmerited blame. No doubt the controversy between his followers and opponents will continue long after his death, nor is it likely that posterity will be more forbearing to his weaknesses than it has lately proved itself to be in the case of other religious reformers, such as Wicklif, or Luther. But if we deduct an equal share on both sides—on the side of exaggerated praise as well as on the side

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of unmerited blame—there remains a sufficient amount of independent contemporary judgment to secure to Keshub Chunder Sen the first place among his fellow-countrymen, and a pre-eminent place among the best of mankind. * * *

"Of late Keshub Chunder Sen's devotion to Christ seemed excessive to many of his friends in India and Europe. If he had lived in the first century he would have been the most loving disciple of the founder of our religion; living in the nineteenth, though he was more truly a Christian than hundreds or thousands who call themselves Christians, yet he would not join our ranks, but set himself the higher and harder task which he called the task of 'Christianising Christianity.'" * * *

"But as long as there is a religion in India, whatever its name may be, the name of Keshub Chunder Sen will be gratefully remembered as one who lived and died for the glory of God, for the welfare of mankind, and for the truth, so far as he could see it."

The English newspapers in India are generally unfavourable to the merits and claims of the inhabitants of the country. But on Keshub's death they sank their differences, and emulated the appreciative enthusiasm of their Hindu contemporaries. *The Englishman*, the chief organ of the English community in Calcutta, spoke as follows:—

"Our practical English standard is the severest test of all, for it is only the practical that will survive; yet test him as we may, Keshub Chunder Sen was no common Hindu, and it must be admitted that his success, as that largely of a self-made and self-cultured man, was reared upon a foundation of independent individuality and purpose. Whatever point of view may be taken, there was much good in him that must be universally admitted and recognised. His amiable character, his graceful manners, his refined address were appreciated by all, and made him a fine model of the modern Bengali gentleman, and an ennobling presence in contemporary Hindu life.

"His activity was almost entirely connected with Calcutta, his birth-place and his permanent home, where he lived to become the most romantic and interesting figure in native society. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the well-known facts of his life, which have become, by the force of circumstances, a kind of public property. No Hindu ever made his name so widely known beyond his own country, or drew the attention of the public so closely in his own day to the details of his career. Yet his life was of the simplest and gentlest, for the elements of his humility were kindly mixed by nature. His success was mainly due to his careful self-culture, his unfailing confidence in himself, and the skill with which he adapted himself to his circumstances. * * *

"Over not a few his dignified appearance and conversation threw a strange irresistable spell, so that they passed from him as enthusiastic admirers; but even the best and most discriminating did not go empty away.

"As an orator, he achieved the highest success among his educated countrymen. He described his public utterances as unpremeditated, but his power was evidently the result of careful training and preparation. His English was wonderfully pure; his delivery free and graceful; and his finish at times almost Ciceronian. It was this faculty, especially in its annual displays before the thousands crowded in the Town Hall,

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that so greatly impressed his English admirers and made him the idol of young Bengal."

The *Indian Daily News* is second only in importance to the *Englishman*, and the estimate it gives is valuable, because more detailed, and shows greater personal knowledge of the man.

"Though young in years Babu Keshub Chunder Sen had almost from his youth occupied the place of a great leader of thought amongst the natives. His position was unique, because the doctrine he preached seemed to be progressive in their nature, and to aim at developing a new system, specially Indian in its characteristics. Keshub Chunder Sen's work is not likely to be fully appreciated in this century; but when men shall look back after a generation or two for the causes of great movements in thought and religion,—movements affecting probably the Indian Christianity of that day in a degree only less than they affect its Hindooism, it will probably be that no figure will occupy so large a space as that of the man who has just gone home to his rest. This is not the place to discuss the peculiar system inaugurated by Keshub Chunder Sen. We have only to-day to express our own sorrow, and we doubt not the sorrow of our readers, at the early passing away of a man who was a great man, because in spite of many peculiarities and some mistakes, he was a strong influence in that awakening, political and religious, which is fast coming upon India. Keshub Chunder Sen will stand as an orator in the front rank with men like Gladstone, Bright, and Gambetta, except that his influence and his oratory were devoted to religion and the culture of the heart, instead of to politics and statecraft. Few Englishmen of any age had a more thorough command of the subtler resources of the English tongue. He could sound the depths of metaphysics, and whilst commanding wonder and admiration at the power of his fancy, and the vigour and richness of his imagination, he could also at will unlock the closest gates of feeling. Such a man was too large to fill a subordinate post, and yet his qualities were scarcely those of a mighty fashioner. He could not organise because nature formed him to rouse and excite, and it was his special mission to create a strong and living desire for higher things in the minds of his countrymen, and to focus their thoughts upon religious subjects. He drew to himself a powerful body of teachers, men of great mental power and singular eloquence, and to these he has bequeathed the task of gathering in the crop he himself sowed so abundantly. He created the church of which he was the head, but it is for those who sat at his feet to give that church a form and system which shall make it a permanent institution in this land."

The *Indian Empire* was a thoughtful exponent at the time of the opinions of the highly educated, anglicised Hindu community. Those who remember how hypercritical this community is in praising the merits of any contemporary character, will appreciate the value of the following estimate:

"We for ourselves have carefully watched the proceedings of the remarkable man for the last ten years; and we must do him the justice of saying that Babu Keshub Chunder Sen was the very best product of English education and Christian civilisation in India. The influence

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which the English nation has been for a century exercising over the people of India—a people who can boast of glorious traditions and of an ancient civilisation of a very high order—has been variously described; and the greatest thinkers of England have already been disposed to think that the most difficult problem which England will shortly be called upon to consider and settle is that connected with her Indian dependency. * *

"The leavening and civilising influence of Christianity was always an object of regard with him; but the materialistic tendencies of the Christian nations, and especially the unwholesome influence those tendencies would unquestionably exercise in the formation of the character of a future India, Keshub Chunder could not contemplate without a feeling of horror. His was the mission to conserve all that is good and great in Hindu philosophy and Hindu sociology, against a vigorous and organised attack of Christian civilisation; and then to adapt them to the stern requirements of the times. He was more of a constructive than destructive reformer. He fully realised, what a majority of educated Indians have since realised, that while it is impossible to shut out the powerful influence of a Christian Government, India will not fare well by making an indiscriminate and wholesale surrender of her religious, political, and social institutions. The great truth which Keshub Chunder Sen fully comprehended and preached was India's conservatism but in a liberal spirit, and in due consonance with the signs of the times. That an Indian should at once combine in his life and character the results of Western science and Eastern spirituality was, in our opinion, the one grand idea upon which Keshub Chunder Sen lived, and which he earnestly and unceasingly, through good report and evil report, laboured to impress on his countrymen.

"In him, the Hindu community has lost the ablest and the foremost of its well-wishers; in him, the Christian world has lost the most uncompromising advocate and admirer of Christ's Christianity, and an unsparing enemy of the present mutilation of his divine precepts and teachings. The political aspirant will miss the person who dived deep into the question of India's political advancement, and who exerted unceasingly to shorten the gulf that separates the various nationalities living in this vast country."

The *Bengalee** is one of the most influential journals in India in modelling and representing public opinion among the native population. And it speaks thus on the event:—

"If we may be permitted to take a forecast of the estimation which Babu Keshub Chunder Sen is to enjoy among coming generations, we may say that he will be regarded as one of the great teachers of mankind who has discovered new sources of thought, new springs of action, in the religious side of man's nature. However conflicting may be the views of his contemporaries with reference to the merits of his teachings or the personal acts of his life, of this we may be sure that he will stand forth before the judgment of posterity, as a man of great genius and of great eloquence, who dedicated the labours of a lifetime to the service of humanity. His weaknesses, if there were any, will be forgotten, his mistakes, for who amongst us is infallible, will be condoned. The recollection of his services will survive, his triumphs will be

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remembered. The impetus that he communicated to the religious thought of his country will be cherished in grateful recollection, and in the pantheon of our great men, in that noble temple which shall be replenished from the great dead of all ages, he will occupy a place by the side of those great teachers of our race, whose names excite homage and veneration in our breasts. Chaitanya, Ram Mohun Roy and Keshub Chunder Sen will form the religious trinity of modern India. But he will be remembered, we venture to think, not so much for the merits of his teachings as for the impulse he communicated to the religious and moral thought of his countrymen. He was the author of a great revival—he called forth into vigorous life the dormant moral and religious instincts of his countrymen. His was the word that broke the spell, that roused the sleeper from his sleep, and communicated the flutter of new life into an all but dead system. Such a man deserves our gratitude, and we trust the public expression of sorrow which must soon follow will take a permanent and useful form. He has lived for us; and let him live in the hearts of our children and our children's children even unto remote generations. We trust all will sink their differences, and unite in honouring one of the greatest men of their race."

It must not be forgotten that Keshub left behind him a large number of very severe opponents. The *Bengal Public Opinion*, at this time the organ of the *Sadharan Brahmo Somaj*, fully represented them. The value of its estimate, therefore, is as peculiar as it is high:—

"His death will cast a gloom all over India. His friends and admirers, from Europe and America, will mingle their tears with those of his own countrymen, and mourn his premature death. Keshub Chunder was yet in his prime of manhood, when the cruel hand of death snatched him away. His age at the time of his death was only a little over forty. His loss will be deeply mourned by the whole of India. As for the Church, of which he was the head and mainstay, his loss will be simply irreparable. That Keshub Chunder was a great man, perhaps the greatest man in India at the present moment, few will deny. Friends and foes alike respected and admired his great genius, and friends and foes alike will at this dark hour join together in mourning his premature death. His faults and foibles, his weaknesses and his shortcomings, will now be buried with his ashes, while his virtues will remain for ever a grand legacy to his countrymen, and his genius will ever receive the homage and admiration of the whole world to the eternal glorification of his God, and his country. May the Lord in His mercy grant peace to his departed soul!"

The *Lucknow Witness* is the organ of one of the straitest sects of Trinitarian Christianity in the country, and this is how it speaks:—

"It would be received with incredulity by those perhaps best qualified to form an opinion, if one said that the Hindoos had spiritual natures which yielded to sympathy, more readily than their intellects yielded to argument. Yet Keshub Chunder Sen demonstrated that to be the fact. He appealed to the craving of human nature for a higher life, and his countrymen responded to the appeal. He offered himself as

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a guide and they followed him without asking for any credentials beyond their own impression that he was in the way of the truth. With a zeal not always surpassed by Christians, his disciples sacrificed time, strength, pleasure, money and earthly prospects to meet the requirements of God, as their teacher made them feel these to be. And he was no quack, working upon their superstition with mysterious rites and formulæ: he touched their spirits and led them."

The *London Daily News* in a few well-chosen sentences expresses itself thus:—

"He had many personal characteristics which fitted him for such religious work. A fine countenance, a majestic presence, and that rapt look which of itself exerts an almost irresistible fascination over impressible minds, lent wonderful force to a swift, kindling, and poetical oratory which married itself to his highly spiritual teaching as perfect music unto noble words."

The Rev. Joseph Cooke of Boston, the famous lecturer and Christian theologian, made extensive travels in India in 1882. He formed Keshub's acquaintance in Calcutta, and their relations became somewhat intimate in spite of the differences in their theology. Mr. Cooke wrote extensive sketches of his experiences of the Brahmo Somaj, and, when the leader died, expressed the following cordial estimate in the *New York Independent*:—

"A heroic soldier of religious reform, a saint, a seer has passed into the world into which all men haste. No Asiatic interested me as much as did Keshub Chunder Sen. I came near enough to him to understand something of his nature, his environment, his struggles, his triumphs, his defeats, his hopes. On no one born in India did I build more expectation than on him as to the future of reform among the educated circles of Hindustan. How noble he was, how serious, how worthy of spiritual leadership, how intense, how eloquent, how prayerful! I saw in his soul the Oriental type, and was taught much by it, and had hoped to be taught more. The news from the Ganges that Keshub Chunder Sen is dead overwhelms me with a more profound sense of personal bereavement than I cannot remember to have felt before at the departure of any public man. A most interesting and noble career ended at an age of less than forty-six. O my brother, my brother, how lonely the world seems without thee!"

Herr Bandmann came out as an eminent Shakesperian actor in Calcutta some years ago. He formed a casual acquaintance with Keshub, and his sentiments published in an American newspaper, came as a curious and unexpected testimony:—

"Keshub Chunder Sen was the most learned and enlightened native in East India I may go further and say in the entire Orient. With a grand, imposing, athletic figure, a noble bearing, he combined an expressive dignity which reminded one of the patrician Roman. He was fully six feet high, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, of slightly

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olive complexion, mild, eloquent eyes, firm set lips, genial chin, black moustache, and long black hair, which hung carelessly over a well-developed forehead. He was my beau ideal of an 'Othello make-up,' and I told him that I would bring his face on the stage when I should play that part. He laughed and came to see it (as he was never absent from any of my Shakesperian impersonations). After the performance he came into my dressing room, and spoke highly of the acting. 'But what did you think of my make-up?' I asked. 'If it was meant for me,' he answered, 'I can only say that I could not see myself in it, for I beheld a handsome man.'

"He spoke the English language without the slightest accent, and he possessed that rarest of all gifts, the art of conversation.

"In his frequent lectures against Brahman fetichism, and in favour of the movement which he called the New Dispensation, he kept his audiences, composed of Europeans and educated Natives, spell-bound. He was versatile to a degree, and could discuss any subject, showing a keen and penetrating understanding in all his views.

"As with most of the educated Hindus, Shakespeare was his favourite topic, and in that subject he was a perfect master. I have greatly benefited in frequent conversations by his transcendental expositions, and looked with pleasure into his inspiring eloquent eyes, which sparkled with Oriental enthusiasm. In religion he was more Christian than Brahman, and although father-in-law of the Maharajah of Cooch Behar, one of the most intelligent, charming, and enlightened Princes in India, * * he (Keshub Chunder Sen) still adhered to the customs of his Hindu fellow-citizens in dress, mode of life, and domestic matters. * * * In the midst of his triumphs he was called to the great field of rest, where we all one day have to go. We shall see him no more, and I presume his mortal body was given over to that dismal spot on the Ganges where it was burnt with sandal-wood, and where his relatives had to light the pile, and do the last honour to his remains. How many thousands must have been within the sombre lofty walls! How many hundreds of thousands must have wept and sorrowed that day over their loss! They may well weep, for with him departed the best and truest friend the native Indian ever had, and the staunchest adherent of the English Crown. The Queen of England knew this well, and sent him a volume of the Prince Consort's Life, with her picture and autograph attached. Peace to his ashes, for he was a great and good man, and pushed India a century ahead."

Perhaps none of these testimonies which we have with pleasure quoted, is more eloquent, true, or more carefully prepared than that of the Hon. H. J. Reynolds, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta. In the annual address delivered to the Senate and Graduates of the University at a Convocation for conferring degrees, the learned Vice-Chancellor pointed to the rising generation of Hindu Scholars the life of Keshub Chunder Sen as the "illustrious example of that culture which it is the aim of the University to foster."

"We meet now and then," he said, "with a man, in whose character the various elements are so genially mixed, that while the powers of a capacious intellect are cultivated to their fullest develop-

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ment, the soul remains as pure as the soul of a child, and the heart as tender as the heart of a woman. When such a man has the divine faculty of impressing others with the great truths which permeate his own soul, he becomes a leader of men, and his appearance inaugurates a new era in the spiritual and mental history of the world. Such was *Sakyamuni*, probably the greatest man whom this country has ever produced. But *Sakyamuni*, you will perhaps say, is a semi-mythical personage; his age is too far removed from ours; the conditions of modern life are different; to us of the present day he is little more than an abstraction and a name. Well—this country has produced, in the present century, a man cast in a very similar mould, a man who has lived and worked among us, whose features were familiar to us all, and whose words are still fresh in the memory of many who are present to-day. I will not attempt to determine the exact rank which history will assign to Keshub Chunder Sen in the noble band of thinkers, reformers, and philanthropists. The full measure of his greatness we of the present generation are perhaps unable to appreciate; just as a traveller, standing at some mountain's foot, cannot truly estimate the height of the eminence which towers above him. On this point, the next age will form a more accurate judgment than is possible now. But I think we shall not err in saying that when the verdict of posterity is passed upon the life and work of Keshub Chunder Sen, four characteristics in his career will be marked out for prominent notice. First, the marvellous harmony with which his mind united some of the noblest products of Western culture and civilisation, with the depth and thoughtfulness of the Oriental intellect. Secondly, the just proportion which his temperament maintained between the domain of thought and the sphere of action. Penetrated as he was with the spirit of devotional religion, he was yet no visionary mystic, his periods of seclusion and meditation were but intervals in which he gathered inward strength for the active prosecution of the work to which his energies and his life were devoted. Thirdly, the catholic spirit which led him to recognise the germs of truth in all religious systems, and to assimilate the loftiest and most ennobling principles of them all. Fourthly, the generous and large-hearted charity which made his career a crusade against all forms of ignorance, oppression, and wrong. The amelioration of suffering, the extension of education, the advocacy of temperance, the discouragement of child-marriage, the emancipation of the Hindu widow—these were the practical aims by which he sought to lighten the burdens and elevate the condition of those around him, no less than by the speculative truths of the pure and lofty theism which he taught. I have dwelt at some length upon this topic, partly because, in such an assembly as this, it is natural to refer to so momentous an event as the death of one of India's noblest sons, and also because the subject is one which seems to me not inappropriate to the occasion which has called us together to-day. For, though much of Keshub Chunder's greatness was peculiarly his own, the distinctive character of his teaching was largely influenced by his education and training. It is a rare thing for a great religious reformer to be a tolerant man. A religious reformer must be thoroughly in earnest, and a thoroughly earnest man, from the depth of his own convictions, is apt to be impatient with those who differ from him, and to be blind to the merits of any other system than his own. The breadth of view which distinguished Keshub Chunder Sen, the catholicity of mind which gave him earnestness without intolerance, and faith without dogmatism, was

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due (if I mistake not) to his study of history, to his knowledge of the rise and progress of other theological systems, to his acquaintance with the phenomena of religious thought in other ages and other countries. He was an illustrious example of that culture which it is the aim and the end of this University to foster, the development of the Eastern mind through the science and literature of the West. And there is another reason why, before such an audience as is gathered here to-day, I should speak of the great man whom India has lost. The life of Keshub Chunder Sen is a pledge and an assurance that Providence has yet a great destiny in store for this land. The age and the country which have produced such a man may well look forward with hopeful anticipation to the next scene of the drama in which he played so distinguished a part. But it is not enough merely to wait and to hope. It remains for you, the students of this generation, to follow in his footsteps, to complete his work, to show yourselves worthy to be called his fellow-countrymen."

These testimonies could be continued to much greater length, and there is some temptation to do so. But we forbear. Those quoted are as far as possible typical. They are from the most diverse sources, and are delivered from the most diverse points of view. They unite only in pointing out the transcendent worth of the character to which they bear tribute. They encourage the present writer in expressing fully his own observations and experiences of the life and principles of one with whom he has been associated as a friend, a colleague, and a follower, almost all the days of his life.

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CHAPTER I.

KESHUB'S ANCESTRAL VILLAGE GARIFA, AND THE SENS OF GARIFA.

THE great *Ganges* loses her traditional sacredness as she travels across the north of Bengal in quest of the eastern sea. The mother of faithful Hindus, the giver of all sanctities both to the living and dead, the source of all bounties, streaming with oblations, flowers, and twinkling lamps, the divine river descended from the dissevered locks of the god of the eternal *Himalayas,* loses her spiritual potency somewhere above *Murshidabad,* the capital of the *Musalman* who ruled the land with a rod of iron. But the saving property of mother *Ganga* is not lost for ever. It is transmitted into the fabled *Bhagirathi* of *Puranic* origin, profanely called the Hughly by foreign invaders. The *Bhagirathi* or *Hughly* henceforth becomes the adored of the faithful. The *Hughly* is a beautiful romantic stream. Cities, towns, and prosperous villages skirt its sides, each with a history of its own, some with legendary associations, equal, in poetic pathos, to the celebrated sites on the haunted banks of the Rhine in Vaterland. Trees, tall grasses, and fantastic creepers weave themselves on the high white sandy beach of the *Hughly*. Boats and barges, of all sizes and shapes, float on her breezy bosom. Bones and bleaching skulls strew her silvery sands: worship-offerings, incense fill the banks with fragrance. Sonorous recitals of sacred Sanskrit by pious Brahmins: the tinkling of gold and silver ornaments on the persons of veiled women who come in crowds to bathe; the chorus of pilgrims, and the merry noise of children spread music over the placid water. Who among us in Bengal has not sailed in a *budgerow* with some marriage procession for the bride's village, where on the riverside the expectant host stood with many men, with bright lanterns, with the sounding music of tomtoms and tambourines, to give us the greeting of honour? Who again among us has not followed the sad procession after some dear one's death to the river, seen the red, unearthly glare of the funeral pyre swaying in the gusty wind, bathed at last at the old familiar *ghat,* when the melancholy rites were at an end, and returned home with a strange exhaustion, a mysterious

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vacancy of dimly realised loss? The river Hughly, thus associated in a hundred remembrances with the Hindu's heart, is a rippling, sunshiny, perpetual stream, and Keshub's ancestral village of *Garifa** is pleasantly situated on the banks of the river Hughly. It is at the distance of about twenty-four miles from Calcutta. In our early days it was universally called *Gorpay*. In epistolary and literary courtesy it was sometimes styled *Gouriffa*. During the last decade, however, it has unexpectedly developed into *Gouripore*. The irrepressible generation of jute-screwers and gunny-weavers who have seized the sweet little village, have invested it with that vulgar euphemism. The village can now boast of tall double chimneys (which do not consume their own smoke), plenty of coal dust, grogshops for the poor, inconvenience and exposure for the better classes, a railway bridge that has just gone through its completion, holding in prospect the endless steam-whistles, the eternal clash, and sooty abominations of the locomotive engine. Our ancestral homes are in ruins, the gardens overrun with jungle, the lakes choked with weeds, our friends and relatives nearly all dead, or dispersed. It is the very reverse of what it was in our boyhood, when there was no epidemic fever, no dram-drinking, no jute-screwing, and no steam-whistles. And we watched from our house-tops the great white concave sails in the river, and the evening sun declining behind the high steeples of the Bandel Church, and the Saracenic Emambara just across the water in the ancient town of Hughly. In latter years Keshub did not profess much love for the village; and he pleaded his justification in the fact that he was not born in *Garifa*, but in Calcutta. But some of the most pleasant recollections of his boyhood, with which the writer's own are so closely knit, always carried us back to the gardens, lakes, summer twilights, and river-side scenes of Garifa, changed from its simplicity like Goldsmith's Auburn. After Keshub's death, the people came forward with a touching testimony of their relationship to him. Perhaps the place will always claim some prominence as Keshub's ancestral seat, and it will be necessary now and then to refer to it in the early parts of the life of Keshub Chunder Sen.†

Keshub's family claims a long and illustrious descent. Every student of the History of Bengal is familiar with the

*E. B. Railway.

†A fitting memorial at Garifa (a school, Library, &c.) to Keshub and Pratap is under consideration.

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ancient dynasty known as the *Sen Rajas*. With hoary antiquity on their heads, emerging in fitful glimpses in Greek, Buddhistic, and Mahomedan history, these Sens are semi-mythological potentates who ornamented the Hindu periods of the ancient history of India. The most trustworthy representatives of their race perhaps were Ballal Sen and Lakshman Sen, who ruled in East Bengal during the time of the invasion of the *Pathans* under Bakhtear Khilji in the thirteenth century. All these Sens were by caste *Vaidyas*, of whose sovereignty, we are told, the *Ain-i-Akbari* makes mention. The meaning of the word *Vaidya* is one versed in the science of medicine. All those who belonged to this caste were professional medical men, skilled both in the theory and practice of healing, men who devoted their whole existence to the study and pursuit of their profession. That the *Vaidyas* do not possess a corresponding caste in any remote province outside Bengal, proves that they cannot be identified with any of the three chief traditional castes of *Brahmans*, *Vaisyas*, and *Kshatryas*. But on the other hand there is no doubt that the *Vaidyas* constitute the second caste in Bengal where *Brahmans* are abundant, but scarcely any legitimate successors of the *Vaisyas* and *Kshatryas* are found. The *Vaidyas* are originally traced to a *Brahman*-father, and a *Vaisya* mother, intermarriages between the two castes having been frequent in early times. It is the *Vaidyas* who, of all non-Brahman castes in Bengal, are privileged to be invested with the sacred thread according to Vedic rites. Of all non-Brahman castes it is the *Vaidyas* who are privileged to acquire the sacred knowledge of all *Vedas*, and the other Hindu *Shastras*. *Vaidyas* are known and recognised in some places as authorised *Gurus*, or spiritual preceptors, having even *Brahmans* as their disciples and followers. It was a *Vaidya* king, Adisur by name, who imported the highest orders of *Brahmans* from *Kanouj*, in the beginning of the tenth century, and their high caste *Sudra* servants now known as *Kayasthas*. A great many of the most learned medical works in Sanskrit were written by the learned members of this superior *Vaidya* caste, which is always distinguished by a high spirit of independence and self-reliance. No *Vaidya* up to this time has been known in these provinces to serve in a menial capacity, though even *Brahmans* have very frequently stooped to that kind of service. The caste is remarkable for its intelligence, literary activity, and social position. No reasonable doubt can therefore be entertained that immediately next to the traditional supremacy of the *Brahmans*, the caste that

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is most influential and intellectual in Bengal is the *Vaidya* caste. The *Sens of Garifa* claim their descent from this regal and high-placed caste, and Keshub Chunder Sen is the lineal successor of the *Sens of Garifa*.

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CHAPTER II.

KESHUB'S IMMEDIATE ANCESTORS.

ABOUT the latter end of the last century* there was living in the little village of Garifa an honest, hardworking, penurious, middle-aged man known as Gokul Chandra Sen of the *Vaidya* caste. He knew, like most men of his class, reading, writing and ciphering. Report says he had even a smattering knowledge of the Persian language. This is by no means unlikely, because a knowledge of Persian was in those days looked upon as a passport to respectability and emolument. But Gokul was so poor that it was with considerable difficulty he could keep his place in the caste, and in the village. The village elders in our time often said that he was not only devoid of the means of buying paper, and writing materials, but was not even able to enjoy the luxury of practising penmanship on the inexpensive *banana* leaf, and had recourse consequently to the scattered foliage of the *banian* tree, with shoots of the young bamboo for his pens.. This is a sort of permanent stationery which, in those days of simplicity, nature gratuitously gave to the impecunious votaries of learning. As Mohammed is said to have composed his *Suras* on shoulder-blades of mutton, so Gokul Chandra Sen wrote his thoughts on the dry leaves of the wild tree. He held a small post of some sort in Hughly on the opposite side of the water, and this barely enabled him to support his family. It seems, however, that in the course of time Gokul slowly rose in the favour of his employers, for we find it recorded that his salary not long after assumed the then respectable figure of Rs. 50 a month. This good man was looked down upon by the village by reason, one might surmise, of the close economy made necessary by a large family with a small income. But few could form any idea of the illustrious race of descendants that would be born to him and his humble wife.

Gokul was the father of six sons, the chief among whom were Madan, Ram Kamal, and Ramdhan ; these brothers strangely turned the fortunes of the family. It is but just

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however to point out that Ram Kamal was the real architect of the wealth, honour, and reputation which the Sens of Garifa came to possess afterwards. Both Madan and Ramdhan reflected the success and lustre of Ram Kamal's genius. Ram Kamal Sen, Keshub's grandfather, was indeed a remarkable man. He was one of those original, powerful characters which the contact of British rule with Hindu talents and potencies developed in the first era of European civilisation in Bengal. There were half a dozen such men reared in the first half of the present century,* all-enduring, hard-working men, with power of will, intelligence, and patience, upon whom the seeds of superior Western example fell, and took deep abiding root. Merchants, capitalists, officials, landowners, reformers were thus raised up all within fifty years, who laid the foundations of great families, great careers, and great centres of influence in the country. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was such a man, and Ram Kamal Sen was another. Ram Kamal, though somewhat unlike the Raja, might be considered as a more typical man of the times. He began life as an assistant type-setter in the Asiatic Society's Press with the monthly pay of eight rupees. By his intelligence and integrity, however, he soon drew the attention of his employers. Type-setting has always been perhaps the lowest and least important occupation in the temple of literary fame. Ram Kamal Sen entered the republic of letters through this humble occupation, but to the end of his life he was the faithful devotee of literature. His early acquirements were not at all considerable. Besides the rudiments of knowledge in his own vernacular, it is said that Ram Kamal was taught a little Sanskrit, and was even indoctrinated in the mystery of the English language. The village schoolmaster had the charge of his education, but he learnt English in Calcutta. "I studied English," says Ram Kamal Sen, "at a school kept by a Hindu up the river where the boys used to make extracts from *Tutinama* (a sort of vocabulary of easy sentences) and Arabian Nights, which were used as class-books, there being no dictionary and grammar." These youthful acquirements could not have been of a high order, the more especially as Ram Kamal, on account of the poverty of his father, was compelled to seek service at the tender age of seventeen, in November, 1800. Four years later, we still find him employed at the press with no increment to his humble salary of eight rupees. Before long, however, his talents drew

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the attention of the celebrated orientalist, Mr. H. H. Wilson, who then resided in India, and was connected with the establishment of the Royal Asiatic Society in Calcutta. In another four years Ram Kamal's income rose to twelve rupees from eight, and he was removed from type-setting to be installed into the clerkship of the Society. The clerkship led to the Native Secretaryship, and Ram Kamal rose from step to step. Though at first the progress was very slight and tardy, the opportunities at last came, and he, neither unwatchful nor impatient, steadily ascended with every fluctuation of fortune. From being Secretary he came to be a member of the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society. Working hard and faithfully as he rose, he became at last the mainspring of the life and prosperity of the whole institution. His great intellectual powers, and the masterly activity of his character had remained all but undeveloped under the somewhat barbarous régime of the rural pedagogue at *Garifa,* but now under the sunshine of favourable circumstance, his whole nature unsealed its resources, and as his place and responsibilities grew, his talents and activities grew also. The exceptional advantages for mental culture offered by a learned institution like the Royal Asiatic Society were seized with eagerness by Ram Kamal Sen. His constant contact with the books, manuscripts, and various documents of the Society, his attendance at meetings and lectures, opened before him a vast field of scholarship, classical and modern, English, Sanskrit, and Bengali, and Ram Kamal soon acquired a mastery over various departments of knowledge. He surprised his superiors by his perseverance, and the singular capabilities which he showed. But it was to his mental power, quite as much as to his moral excellence, that he owed his subsequent success. The Council of the Asiatic Society consisted in those days of English gentlemen who both in official and private life, represented the best phases of Western civilisation and Christian character. And in their constant intercourse with the Native Secretary, they were greatly impressed with the uncommon intelligence and probity of the man upon whom they had to rely so much. Men of talents and integrity were not so abundant in those days as now, and Ram Kamal Sen's exceptional abilities were recognisedd by the offer of the Treasurership of the Calcutta Mint. This was a position of almost unlimited responsibility and prominence. And so well did he discharge the onerous functions of his office that the further honor of the Dewanship of the Bank of Bengal was conferred on him, and Ram Kamal Sen now became one of

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the great men of Calcutta. He had an income of Rs. 2,000 a month. What a transition from the humble place of a compositor in the Asiatic Society's Press on Rs. 8! He built a mansion in the centre of the town. Hundreds of men from all classes of society sought employment at his doors, and Dewan Ram Kamal Sen rose to the pinnacle of worldly prosperity.

Worldly advancement had a double effect upon the character of Ram Kamal Sen. It matured his mental faculties, and thus perfected his education. It also expanded his heart towards every movement which had for its object the good of the country. Selfishness had never formed a prominent feature of his character. Ever intent on furthering the interests of his relatives, neighbours, village-men, and caste-men, the new powers and opportunities he got he devoted to the welfare of the whole public. This was about the time when the great duty of giving education to the people of Bengal recommended itself to Government. The renewal of the charter of the East India Company in 1813 was fertile with the principles of imparting knowledge and enlightenment to the subject population. The Hindu College was opened in 1817. From its very establishment Ram Kamal Sen took an active interest in the movement; the School Book Society which was established in 1818 in Calcutta with the object of publishing instructive books for the children of Hindu families, had the same enthusiastic sympathy from him. He was elected a member of the General Council of Education, composed at the time of Government officials of the highest distinction. From an early age his love of Sanskrit was considerable and, when the Sanskrit College was started in 1824, no one was so ready to help it with funds and personal exertions as Ram Kamal Sen. In fact he became the head of the institution. In all matters of public education his position became so prominent that even the Committee of the Doveton College, whose object was the education of European and Eurasian children, requested his co-operation which he willingly gave. These literary engagements naturally opened his mind to the necessity of offering facilities to his own countrymen to learn the English language, and to Englishmen to learn the vernacular of the province. With this object he undertook to compile a very voluminous dictionary in English and Bengali. When the dictionary was completed, Dr. Marshman, the great Serampore Missionary, himself a celebrated Bengali scholar, said about it in the *Friend of India* which he edited, "this dictionary is the fullest, most valuable work of its kind which we possess, and will be the most lasting monu-

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ment of Ram Kamal Sen's industry, zeal, and erudition. It is perhaps the work by which his name will be recognised by posterity." These various labours did not, however, exhaust the energy of this remarkable man. We find Ram Kamal Sen a most useful Native member of the District Charitable Society, whose noble and long-continued operations to help the distressed of all classes and conditions of the community have made him deservedly famous. His ideas on the subject of charity were remarkable for a Hindu, and in great advance of the times. He spoke of "the evil effects of indiscriminate largesses, and the painful weariness and contagion of diseases, the loss even of life, to which crowds of squalid mendicants are exposed, who gather from distant parts on occasions of the deaths of the relatives of wealthy men." He took an active part also in the Committee of Enquiry which Government appointed to ascertain the state of medical education in the country, and his views on the subject were so important that the utmost attention was paid to them when the formation of the Fever Hospital in Calcutta* was determined upon. Ram Kamal Sen's ideas and suggestions on the Sanitation and improvement of the town of Calcutta, expressed half a century ago, would do credit to any municipal reformer and patriot of the present day. Thus, in many capacities and under various conditions of responsibility, Ram Kamal Sen worked incessantly for nearly forty years. He gained universal respect and esteem, and Europeans and Natives vied with each other in giving him honor. His genius and his labours prefigured the catholic, manysided career of his illustrious grandson.

Of his religious views we do not know much. There is no doubt that Ram Kamal Sen was a sincere believer in the principles of the *Vaishnava* sect to which all his ancestors belonged. But he was not only orthodox, he was positively ascetic in his habits. His power of work was enormous. He worked the whole hot live-long day with no more food than a cup of tea, and an unsubstantial native sweet known as *jelabi*. In the evening, after returning from his varied labours, he cooked and ate his solitary meal. That he was not tied down to the superstitions of his hereditary creed, and his spirit at times spontaneously rose to the heights of the simple religion of nature, we have good reasons to believe. Some years ago in turning over the old family papers with Keshub, we lighted upon a number of beautiful Bengali prayers in manuscript,

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all written in a scrupulously neat hand by Ram Kamal Sen. The devotions were intended for familiar use. They were adapted to different occasions of life, to be said in the morning and evening, before meals, or when leaving for distant journeys. The sentiments were simple, devout, a pure heart-felt piety pervaded them all. Ram Kamal Sen was the contemporary of Raja Ram Mohun Roy. Though in educational and other public matters there can be little doubt the two men mutually sympathised and co-operated, the founder of the Brahmo Somaj found very little sympathy, perhaps a good deal of opposition in the principal work of his life from Keshub's grandfather. When he died Keshub was a little over five years old, but Ram Kamal Sen had frequent occasions to watch and observe the potentialities of his tiny descendant. We have repeatedly heard members of the Sen family declare that the old wise patriarch forecast the future of his infant grandson, and said *"Baso"* (the pet name by which Keshub was called in those days) "would alone be able to sustain the family reputation."

Ram Kamal Sen left a large number of sons of whom Peary Mohan Sen was the second. Of Peary Mohan much cannot be written, because he died at the early age of thirty-four, only four years after the death of his illustrious father. But all accounts agree that he was a most handsome, amiable, and kind-hearted young man. The rich and the poor, but specially the poor, loved him with the utmost warmth of cordiality. He, too, was a *Vaishnava,* a sincere pure-minded man, whose generous dispositions, and mild simple ways won the esteem and goodwill of every one. Amongst his many relatives and acquaintances he did not leave an enemy. The dependants and servants of the family adored him ; petty-traders, and humble men of various kinds poured into his presence, when the family largesses were denied them, and his charities failed no one, though he gave in such modest ways that few could know the secrets of his giving. Of his intellectual powers not much is heard, but there is no doubt he was intelligent, and refined in his tastes. He was a fond husband, an affectionate father, most loyal to his elder brother, and, as a member of society, most pleasant and noble-hearted. Peary Mohan Sen died in 1848, and left three sons of whom Keshub was the second. Keshub was only ten years old when his father died. It is difficult to say what part the father had in the education of his sons, but judging how very young the latter were when he died, that part was quite inconsiderable. Besides when Ram

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Kamal Sen died, the management of the whole joint-family, and the education of the children of all the brothers, devolved not upon Peary Mohan, but upon Hari Mohan Sen, the eldest born, and the natural head of the house. But if Keshub's early life was not directly influenced by his father, it was greatly influenced by his mother, the young handsome widow of about twenty-five with whom Peary Mohan left all the fatherless children. An attempt must therefore be made to say a few words about Keshub's mother.*

It is not our wish to flatter popular prejudice by tracing Keshub Chunder Sen's greatness to his mother. But it must be said that his mother is an uncommon woman, and there is no doubt that much of the maternal excellence was transmitted to the character of the son. It is difficult to describe a Hindu lady in words that will convey an adequate impression to the European mind. In the first place, she is without education in the ordinary sense of that word. She may be able to read a little, and now-a-days she may perhaps write a letter or two ; she may recite a *sloka,* or possess a smattering of astrology, but the real orthodox Hindu lady is not learned in books. In the second place the Hindu lady has no society, except, now and then, that of other ladies like herself, who meet her on occasions of religious and domestic festivals. But then the Hindu system of household is the joint patriarchal system by which many relatives live under a common roof with their wives and children, so that the ladies have plenty of company in their own homes. The Hindu lady has no admirers, no fashions, no dinings out, no shoppings, no opportunity of producing the least impression upon the outside public. All her work is purely domestic work, plain, hard, daily drudgery, the rearing up of children, the cooking of meals, the cleaning and sanitation of the house, the preparation of preliminaries for the household worship, and occasions of religious festival. It has been already said that Keshub's mother had become a widow at the age of about twenty-five, and Keshub himself was less than eleven years old at the time. The Hindu widow of the higher castes has to live the life of a perfect anchorite. She is a rigid vegetarian, eats a single meal in the day, fasts twice in a month without an atom of food or drink even in the hottest times of the year, never wears an ornament, dresses carelessly and coarsely, and devotes her life to religious duties which are her only

*For detailed account, refer to her autobiography published by Rai J. L. Khastgir Bahadur.

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pleasure. A great many practise this asceticism as mere routine, some follow it from fear of public opinion, not a few indulge in secret luxury and vice, but just a handful take to the asceticism out of genuine preference, and a hear-felt desire to renounce the world. Keshub's mother most undoubtedly answers to the last description.

Born of very respectable parents in *Tribeni* on the opposite bank of the Ganges at her maternal uncle's house, trained up according to the strictest rules of Hindu seclusion, Saroda Sundari was married to Peary Mohan Sen when she was not more than nine or ten years of age. Of a fair complexion, rather tall in height, with a figure well-shaped and well-rounded, with features exquisitely chiselled, wearing over all her handsomeness the sacred veil of classical Hindu modesty, the daughter-in-law of the great Ram Kamal Sen was the cynosure of all eyes in the little village, and the envy of many a girlish heart. But not for a single day could the most captious of her companions and relatives detect in her a symptom of vanity or conceit. Her mother-in-law, Ram Kamal's queenly consort, was the absolute mistress of the house; the wife of Peary Mohan's elder brother was a sort of crown princess; next to her came a number of dowager daughters, and influential aunts; and last of all our dear mother Saroda, who struggled in the midst of a hopeless juniority, to the disadvantages of which she added an uncontrollable shyness of nature, and a scrupulous self-abnegation. It was well she learnt the practice of these virtues in early age, and trained herself to obscurity and want of influence. For scarcely had she emerged from her long minority when forlorn widowhood claimed her for its own, and trials and privations, which she could never have foreseen, thickened around her from every side. Her sons were not old enough to render her any material help. Her own relatives at *Garifa* were powerless to console her, and she was left all alone to face the indignities of a hostile world, and the relentlessness of Hindu widowhood, with no help but the innate goodness of her heart. So long as prosperity remained to the family of the Sens of Garifa, she was in hopes of seeing better days. But the decline of wealth and prestige soon showed itself, and upon no one did the ultimate blow descend with heavier effect than the heart of the poor bereaved widow. Amidst difficulties and sorrows, however, which need not be recounted, she was never for a single day indifferent to her religious vows and duties. The service of the household god was in her charge: the *gurus*, and the *Brahmins* looked up to her for encouragement; the

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old servants, and decayed relatives hoped for consolation from her. There is no distant pilgrimage which, highly connected as she is, she has not made. There is no rigorous fast or vigil which she has not practised, there is no solemn orthodox vow which she has not taken. Yet the asceticism of her hard widowhood is sweetened by a genuine tenderness unreservedly shown to all. Her strong simple common sense, her wonderful piety and gentleness of disposition give her an insight into subjects, which are sealed to the purblind vision of half-educated young ladies. Her unrestricted sympathies have endeared her to her orthodox relations, as well as the members of the Brahmo Somaj. If this was all her character, perhaps it would not be worth mentioning. But the singular thing about her is that she has harmonised her undoubted orthodoxy with the advanced ideas and practices of her great son. Her fondness for Keshub has been always intense, and she has taken natural delight in his eminence and reputation. There is, however, an invaluable service she has done to his movement. She has been the pioneer of a large community of ladies who, though they retain their place in the old national religion, heartily join the services, hymns, and festivals of the Brahmo Somaj. But no one of them has shown such fervor of emotion, such enthusiasm for personal piety as she has. The younger generation of Brahmos, the wives of our missionaries, and many other un-idolatrous ladies have had to recognise her as their undoubted spiritual superior, even in such practices and precepts as are inculcated by the New Dispensation. She will be considerably more than sixty now, but her benign face still wears the serene sunshine of purity and womanly grace. When Keshub finds the recognition of his place in the estimate of a grateful posterity, there is little doubt that the virtues of his good, noble-hearted mother will be recognised also.

There is an awful calm about her aged brow since the death of her great son. Her form has not lost, but gained in dignity by her unspeakable sorrow. She bears simple but eloquent testimony to Keshub's worth, she considers him hardly human. "Some divine being," says she, "came to the world through my womb. I knew him not while he was with me. I know him now. How could anything mortal put on the strange beauty of smile which played on my Keshub's face immediately after he breathed his last? That smile was supernatural. In the fatal agony of the final hours, he rested his head on my bosom, and said 'Mother, can nothing cure my pain?' 'Thy pain, my child, is the result of my sins,' I cried,

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'the righteous son suffers for the wretched parent's unworthiness.' 'Say not so, do not say so, mother dear,' Keshub exclaimed, 'know that the Supreme Mother sends it all to me for my good.'" When she felt the end approaching, she bitterly grieved for her sins, and said her jewel was going to be plucked from her heart. "Do not say so," Keshub faintly cried, "Where can there be another mother like you? Your virtues God has given me. All that I call my own is yours." So saying he took the dust of her feet, and put it on his head. Fervent and sweet-tempered in her piety always, there is a strange dignity and pathos in her prayers now, which seems to be of another world. When she comes to Keshub's domestic sanctuary at times, and offers her sorrowing devotions, the whole congregation is melted to tears, and thrilled into awe. Truthful, tender, and sympathetic always, there is now a motherly kindness about her ways which few can forget. All, all who see her, whatever their feelings, whatever their differences, find a ready welcome. Yet she is identified in love with one only, from one source she draws her inspiration of goodness, and that is Keshub, her darling, departed son. She retains every one of her faculties unimpaired, and enjoys a tolerably good health. Her surviving sons and daughters look upon her with tender love and honor. But in the extensive community founded by her son, she has many sons and daughters to whom she will ever be an object of reverence. She may live, may she live for some years yet.* Her place in the heart of every one of Keshub's friends is assured. Alas, we cannot but feel that her happiness is buried in the past. But undying honor shall belong to her in all the future. She would be a singular woman anywhere. Amongst the somewhat degenerate womanhood of Bengal at the present day, she will be long remembered by many as truly a guardian angel.

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CHAPTER III.

FOREGLEAMS AND FORESHADOWS.

KESHUB AS A BOY (1838 TO 1852).

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN was born on the 19th November, 1838, in Calcutta. His family and ours were distantly related. But his grandfather the great Ram Kamal Sen, in marrying his niece to Tara Chand Mozoomdar, the writer's grandfather, treated the latter as his own son, and hence the two families lived on terms of closer intimacy than the actual relationship warranted. We all belonged to the same village, though the present writer spent the first eight years of his life at Garifa, and Keshub lived in Calcutta almost entirely. But he used to come to Garifa with the rest of the family at the times of great ceremonies and festivals, and thus we met at intervals. The Sens, however, were so wealthy, distinguished, powerful in our little old-fashioned village, that an unapproachable brilliance enveloped their old and young. The men appearing in the village at long intervals, were treated by the people like demigods, every one flattered them excessively ; and the boys, fair, well-dressed, and inaccessible, seemed to have dropped out of the clouds. They sometimes rode on handsome ponies, and this was a wonderful sight to us ; besides they had about them a strong surrounding of red-turbanned, bearded, up-country ruffians (*durwans*), a species of body-guard, upon whose faces we villagers dared not cast our eyes for very fear. The Sens of Garifa were proud of their wealth, and fond of display. "I was reared," says Keshub, "by a wealthy father and grandfather. Opulence and luxury surrounded my childhood, but as I grew up my mind began to show the spirit of natural poverty."

When the present writer was taken to live, and be educated in Calcutta, being not older than nine years at the time, our house, and that of the Sens at Colutolah, were only a few feet apart, and Keshub and ourselves being nearly of the same age, besides being relatives, grew very friendly. He was a fair, calm, good-looking boy ; his simple boyish beauty was angelic. He was somewhat thin, though his face was full, rather square, but the massiveness of the lower jaws, a very prominent feature of later years, had not till then developed. He was exceedingly

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mild and reserved. "The spirit of natural poverty," to which allusion has been made before, was not observable in his boyhood. He was fond of fine clothes, fine boxes, fine things of all sorts, which he did not like any one to touch, or meddle with in any way. His intelligence was great, it was varied, quite unusual, in fact was the chief feature of his character as a boy. He was educated in the Hindu College, where he took his admission in 1845, but he had some preliminary teaching in the vernaculars at home. The boys of the family were taught by an aged Brahmin *Guru Mahashay* (worshipful preceptor) whose fingers, too often used in slapping and thumping the boys, Keshub described, "were as thick as plantains," and whose voice was as hoarse as that of a bull! The Hindu College was the aristocratic and really good school of those days. At the annual examination, every year Keshub carried away a prize, and sometimes two, there being only two prizes in the class, one for English, and the other for arithmetic, in both of which he did equally well. While he was in the first junior class in 1850, they presented to him, as the annual prize, such an enormous volume of pure and mixed mathematics, that, thenceforward, Mr. Sturgeon, the fond old teacher, used to call Keshub "the little boy with the big book." He was only twelve years then, somewhat small in size, and timid for his age, but in the progress of his studies his smartness was phenomenal. Certainly, till then he showed no tendency to share in the family deficiency in mathematics. Keshub prepared his lessons industriously, and added patient labour to natural genius. This habit of hard work and systematic industry equally distinguished him at all times of life. One day his mother missed him towards the end of the day, and, after the servants had tired themselves by running in search of him everywhere, little Keshub was found lying fast asleep on the roof of the topmost story of the house with a book half open on his breast!

Keshub's intelligence showed itself in other ways than his readiness at lessons. He had a wonderful sagacity in making out the secrets of men and things. There used to be in those days a magic play for the entertainment of boys at the Hindu College theatre. It was popularly called Gilbert's play, Gilbert being an East Indian who gave performances with the magic lantern, and feats of jugglery. Keshub so fully mastered the juggler's art, after being once or twice present, that he announced similar performances of his own. For a Bengali boy of thirteen, totally ignorant of everything outside his household and school life, it required indeed uncommon shrewdness to find out without assist-

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ance the secrets of a professional performer with all the skill and prestige of a European training. A week or so after Gilbert's play, Keshub gave notice of a magic performance to take place in the family house at Colutolah. All the boys of the neighbourhood flocked in, the admission fee was four pice a-head. He procured an old magic lantern from somewhere, and drew figures with his own hands on scraps of old newspapers, turning them into magic lantern slides with commendable skill. One of these figures, we distinctly remember, was Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra. He cut wax candles, and produced red handkerchiefs from them. From a glass tumbler he split a coloured fluid, and it fell as a shower of flowers upon the audience. He deliberately loaded a large pistol with his uncle's gold watch, fired, and everybody instantly found the watch hanging from the neck of a wax-doll on the platform. He did various other things. He went to the bazar, bought second-hand European clothes, and arrayed himself in them while performing; he rubbed his face with chalk and vermillion, and so cleverly did he go through his part, that on one occasion a British rum-distiller, whose factory was near Garifa, actually took him to be a journey-man Italian, which Keshub gave himself out to be!

Now these and other things made him to us, boys, quite like a prodigy, and Keshub was perfectly conscious of his own importance. Nobody ventured to approach to anything like his confidence; he never made a favorite, or bosom-friend, of any one, as we all did, though there were ever so many candidates for that honor, but he descanted generally on the advantages of friendship. We clearly remember a passage which he used to quote often. "A man without a friend," said he, "was like a world without a sun." He seldom, if ever, joined in an old game, or one that was started by any other boy and not by himself, but as we all played he watched us from a distance. If he ever consented to play with us, he would generally devise a new or unfamiliar game, and reserve the chief part for himself. Sometimes he would start a dispensary, himself be the doctor, and assign to us the subordinate parts of apothecaries or patients. Sometimes he would set on foot a post office, make us his dâk runners, and himself sit grandly in the office, with a pair of green spectacles on his nose, as the Post Master General! We remember he once organised our party into a European band. We wrapped our *dhotics* round our legs in the form of trowsers, and not having any instrument, we rigidly stretched our thumbs and forefingers, and on the skinny curve

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thus made, we blowed lustily, while Keshub, who was never satisfied with doing as others did, produced an old drum which he put on the back of a little boy, and headed the procession by thumping away with all his might. He took great pleasure in making up *jatras*, the popular semi-theatrical performances of Bengal. He was specially fond of *Ram Jatra*, representing scenes from the *Ramayana*, dressing up servants as soldiers, monkeys, and Cinghalese monsters, and singing out of a dilapidated treatise composed by a well-known popular poet. By-and-bye he established juvenile classes for reading, writing and recitation, and played scenes out of Shakespeare's Hamlet, but of all this more as we proceed.

If Keshub Chunder Sen as a boy was not wanting in self-consciousness, he was also not wanting in self-will. The active and passive powers of nature were equally blended in him. There was no getting on with Keshub if any one chose to quarrel with him. We never saw him fight in right earnest. We remember he had once a bad quarrel with Jogin his cousin, whom, instead of fisting as other boys would do, he pinched all over the body with such adroitness and persistence that the poor fellow roared out in agony, and confessed a defeat. This was Keshub's characteristic mode of fighting. His self-will was most quiet, he was never noisy or demonstrative when put on his mettle, but he was insatiable and indefatigable in his attempts to overthrow his opponents. He could be patient for a long time, but nothing satisfied him short of absolute victory. In any case of serious disagreement we do not remember that he ever sued for terms with his adversaries, but always waited for them to feel his power, to come and seek reconciliation, and few could hold out against him to the end.

People have often asked if Keshub was religious in his boyhood. There is no hesitation to answer in the negative. We remember him taking part in the juvenile performance of the *Ratha Jatra* (car festival) and *Kartika Puja*, but this was entirely for amusement, there was no purpose of worship in it. He was fond of bathing in the Ganges, wearing a full bunch of sacred thread scraped scrupulously white, and he daubed his body with numerous patches of white sandal paint representing the sacred names. But all this was done, to the best of our recollection, more for fancy and ornament than devotional feeling. For every kind of personal cleanliness he had a natural partiality, and the personal cleanliness practised by him had a vague touch of religion in it. But we do not remember any instance of precocious spirituality in him. If, however, he was

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not religious, Keshub as a boy was certainly very moral. Next to his singular intelligence, the chief characteristic of his boyhood was the purity of his moral nature. The moral condition of Bengali boys was simply frightful in those days, and Keshub was verily looked upon as a saint in their midst. One could not say conscientiously that there was not a single flaw in his boyish life, but his virtues were so many, and so considerable, his faults so few, and so small, that to our knowledge no other boy could compare with him. He was a noble, pure-minded boy, free from falsehood, free from vice. He scorned to associate with bad boys. They had to simulate some of his purity when they approached him, and it is not difficult to remember dissolute young rowdies putting on an absurd air of sanctimoniousness when they felt it necessary to court his favor. These persons he never scrupled to use for his purposes, but he always took care to keep aloof from them. Truly he was a born king in our boyish world. He was nearly of the same age as his companions, but he was in a higher form of the school ; his talents, everybody said, were high, so high that we could never form any definite notion of their altitude ; in short there was that in him which made us regard him with a sort of fear, and we could not but feel he was our master. He was not wanting in kindness to his companions if they kept their distance ; he was invariably mild and gentle ; he had very little of natural anger, and was singularly free from every kind of ill-temper. But he did not seem to be a warm-hearted boy, as so many other boys were, and there was always a strange reserve about his manners. A great part of it was the effect of a constitutional shyness, which clung to him all through life, and nothing is so apt to be mistaken for want of affectionateness as this, but part of it was also the result of a natural distrust in others. In after-life we have sometimes heard him say that he was of a suspicious temperament, and that his rule was to judge every man bad, unless he could prove himself otherwise. Whatever the reason might be, he was not found to be as frank as boys generally are, and hence many of his youthful acquaintances accused him of vanity and conceit. No charge, however, could be more unfounded. He was most loving to his mother, to his sisters, and other relatives. Only he was not of a forward disposition, he dreaded to be led into evil by those who came to associate with him, and he never liked to commit himself before strangers. As a boy he was the pride of his mother's heart, the delight of his family, the ornament of his school, the glory of his village, and the natural leader of his

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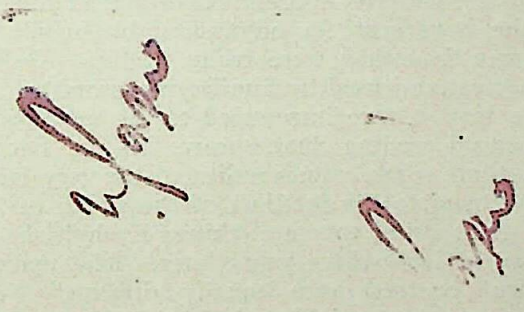
companions. His boyhood gave ample promise of what he was to be afterwards. It is strange to reflect how his various boyish activities reproduced themselves repeatedly in later life, and never so much as in the last years ; how his dispositions both in their positive and negative character, clung to him in every subsequent emergency. He always grew, but he never outgrew any part of his nature. Throughout his life he was singularly true to himself. Even the deficiencies of his mental formation, such as they were, he had neither the art, nor the wish to conceal. Looking upon those deficiencies as peculiarities of natural gift, he faithfully tried to turn them into virtues conducive to the success of the work of his life. He was a master in the power of self-education. He never wasted any gift, never misused any faculty, never failed to make the best of any opportunity he ever got. With his stock of talents, certainly abundant, and of a high order, but by no means superhuman, he entered into his life-work, and so well did he use the good parts entrusted to him that they multiplied a hundred-fold, till his spiritual wealth enriched his land, and nation, and perhaps the whole world.



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CHAPTER IV.

ENTHUSIASM AND AUSTERITY.

KESHUB AS A YOUNG MAN (1852 TO 1859).

IN 1852 we find Keshub in the first senior class of the school department of the Hindu College. His precocious intelligence of which enough has been said, grew with his years, and his friends anticipated the most brilliant academic career for him. But a most unfortunate occurrence marred these prospects. Some petty misunderstanding between the patrons and authorities of the Hindu College, led, about this time, to the establishment of a rival school under the name of the Metropolitan College, which soon became exceedingly fashionable. It was started by a wealthy and influential family of Calcutta, who made extensive outlays of money, engaged a brilliant staff of teachers, and went from house to house supplicating every Hindu guardian to send his boys to the new college. Thus Keshub's uncle was induced to withdraw him from the Hindu College, and transfer him most unwisely to the Metropolitan in 1853. One of the devices planned by the managers of this institution to ensure its success was to flatter the self-consciousness of the boys sent for admission, by installing them into higher forms than they were really fit for. Keshub being the scion of a great and wealthy family, was admitted to the highest class. He was at once introduced to the most difficult studies. He commenced reading Shakespeare, Milton, Bacon, and other English authors whose names indicated the very loftiest standard of learning open to the intellect of the youth of Bengal at the time. In the natural course of things Keshub should have read these books at least three years later. The mathematical and philosophical courses were equally difficult. Now Keshub's intellect was so susceptible and elastic that it could stand the strain of the purely literary part of this unnatural training, and he made fair progress in his English, but the mathematical course proved too much for him. The result was that he had virtually to give up mathematics, a shortcoming which materially affected the finale of his education. The Dutts of Wellington Square, who had been chiefly instrumental in the

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establishment of the Metropolitan College, had in the meantime suffered serious reverses in business; their resources were crippled, the novelty of the educational undertaking wore off, and the spirit of competition consequently abated. The pecuniary and other means by which the Government maintained the Hindu College being practically unlimited, the contest soon became too unequal, and after a brief, brilliant, and extravagant career of a few years, the Metropolitan College collapsed. The boys, such as were still fit for further education, had to be sent back to the Hindu College, and Keshub, with some of his friends, rejoined the old *alma mater* in 1854. But he did not return the same man. Indiscreetly withdrawn from earning and enjoying his junior scholarship, from studies most congenial, and entirely under his control, from a course of education to which he had organically grown from his infancy, dabbling with books much beyond his normal capacities, his mathematical faculty completely spoiled, Keshub returned to the Hindu College very unlike his former self. Henceforth his educational career was not at all brilliant. He toiled at it with all his might; he was more than passable in English; he did tolerably well in history; he had a liking for chemistry, and spent a lot of money in buying a set of apparatus; he did very well indeed in mental and moral philosophy, but he was at desperate odds in trigonometry and conic sections. He took great pains to draw the figures and diagrams (he had a considerable taste for drawing of every kind); he copied the formulas in his neat and beautiful handwriting; but his heart was not in the business at all. He wrote long deprecating epistles to his elder brother Nobin Chunder Sen, who was stern, and never consented to his desire of renouncing mathematics. Keshub was not happy at this state of affairs, and the result of it all proved to be disastrous.

Keshub left college in 1858, but from 1856 to 1858 chiefly devoted himself to the study of mental and moral philosophy. We used to find him calmly and gravely seated at the College library table, intent upon the papers in his little Russian leather portfolio, which he carried with him everywhere. There was a method and gravity in whatever he did. He was exceedingly attached to Mr. Jones, the professor of philosophy, who took a great deal of interest in his progress, and gave special attention to his training, for all which Keshub was looked upon by students in general as a sort of youthful philosopher. There was good reason for his being so regarded. If his boyhood was grave, his youth was austere. Soon, and rather

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suddenly, he gave up the few frivolities of his earlier years. He gave up eating fish when he was a mere boy. Being the child of a *Vaishnava* family, he never used to eat meat, but he was allowed to eat fish. He had an attack of chicken-pox when he was about fourteen years old, and as persons so suffering have to give up the use of fish temporarily, he gave it up, and never took to it again. Later on in 1864, while making his first missionary tour through Bombay and Madras, he tried to eat a meat diet on board the coasting steamer by which he travelled, but it neither agreed with his stomach nor his gums, and since then he was always a strict vegetarian. During the latter part of his last illness, the doctors prescribed a partly meat diet for him which he took with much reluctance. He had no great bigotry on the subject of vegetarianism, but he held, and sometimes expressed, that in his own case eating meat would be tantamount to the commission of sin, and he discouraged it in others as much as he could.* But the renunciation of meat eating was a very small part of his austerities. One of his youthful pleasures had been to screech on a shabby old violin ; this he now broke and threw away. He used in his younger days to have a considerable preference for card-playing, which, about this time, he not only gave up, but proscribed as positively immoral. He could never sing, but always had a positive passion for the species of musical entertainments known as *jatras*, half-dramatic, and half-operatic. He would sit up the whole night with his companions to watch these performances, chewing *pan-supari*, and throwing pieces of small coins to the singers. But he resolutely set his face against all this for the time.

Keshub was married in 1856, on a stormy night at a village called *Bali*, about six miles to the north of Calcutta, to an intelligent, little girl not more than nine or ten years old. This was a typical case of Hindu early marriage. The marriage was of course not his own making. It was arranged for him, according to time-honored Hindu usage, by his guardians, and he mechanically went through the ceremony in filial obedience, as he would go through any other performance of undoubted duty unto others. That he had no great enjoyment of matrimonial relations at the time is evident from what he said of his marriage many years afterwards. "My honeymoon," says

*In the *New Samhita* written in 1883 (Laws for the members of the New Dispensation) he says "as for meat, let those abstain who have taken the vow of poverty and simplicity, and are pledged to self-denial with a view to guard themselves and their neighbours against carnality."

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he, "was spent amid austerities in the house of the Lord." In fact, the first years of his married life were the life of an anchorite. He never associated with his wife, and had very strong notions against any frivolity, or even any familiarity with one's wife. It was, for some time, apprehended that Keshub's marriage would turn out to be a mistake. But he developed in his ideas of conjugal relations as he developed in other things, till in the end his domestic life became a true model for all. In the fourth chapter of the *Jeevan Veda* he describes his condition at this time. He was moody and cheerless. He seldom laughed, or even smiled, and he did not hesitate to express his disapprobation if he found others laughing overmuch. He read certain Christian sermons, notably those of Blair and Chalmers. He privately wrote morning and evening prayers which he read by himself on the terrace of the house. He composed short exhortations and words of warning for passers-by, which he caused to be stuck on the house-walls in the neighbourhood. In short, he brooded on his own imperfections, and the imperfections of others, and the thoughts made him most restless. He was yearning after something he knew not what, he was passing through a great transition. "The house in which I lived," says he, "and the room in which I slept were to me like a wilderness, like a grave-yard. The noise of men around me I regarded as the howl of wild beasts. Wherever I saw any evil done, it seemed to me as if it was the playground of the demon of death. Amidst all the wealth of the world I was content to wear coarse costume. True I did not weep much, but I did not laugh at all. Such was my state when I got up in the morning, such was my state when I went to bed in the night."* His elder brother, who was his immediate guardian, and other members of the family, took notice of the change. They tried to ridicule him, to argue him out of it, and failing in that, tried to put him down with a high hand. But nothing availed. It seemed as if he was under the operation of impulses he could not control, as if the hand of destiny was upon him, secretly shaping his character, and creating in him the elementary principles of the great work which he was so shortly to undertake. Those principles in their first formation were almost purely ethical. He matured his morality, before he began his religion.

The following contrast of Keshub's personal appearance at

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the ages of twenty and forty was written by us during his lifetime, and much liked by him:—

"He was morose, sad, and stern when he was twenty years old. Novel-reading was an abomination unto him, though everybody around him read works of fiction. Love-songs he abhorred and fled from, though all his friends sang them. He was constantly alone. Few followed him, few loved him. He was most scrupulous in spending his little youthful money, and his long youthful days. Could any one detect him gossiping, or laughing, or exchanging jokes and compliments? Neither did he eat fish nor meat. He shunned the company of his fond girlish wife, so much so that she often accused him of hating her, and often wished for her own death. Rigorous and truthful in speech, he was a youth of so few words that his neighbours blamed him for being a proud, contemptuous, unsociable young man. If he read much, and in those days he *did* read much, he read austere books of moral philosophy, or fiery sermons, or hard intellectual compositions, hating poetry and fiction alike. We remember him liking only two poetical works, one was Young's Night Thoughts, and the other was Shakespeare's Hamlet. Both these accorded well with his sombre moral temperament. He was tall, thin, lank, bony. I believe he sometimes wept alone, but I never saw him weep, only his face was sad. He took long solitary walks on the terrace in the darkness of night. He wrote secret prayers which he read by himself, he indited solemn warnings for passers-by, which he stuck up on the house walls. He was a regular youthful John the Baptist. Thus did my friend lay the rocky foundations of a pure character, when he was twenty. Such was the stern, gaunt, unattractive skeleton he was in those days.

"Let us take a broad leap over twenty years. Now he is fat, florid, unctuous, and past forty. Now he is surrounded by many sons and daughters, friends and followers. So joyful is his face that smiles and sunshine seem to be always playing around him. So successful he is that every one seems to obey him. He loves his friends most tenderly, and spends long hours in talking and laughing with them. Honour and distinction have thrust their alliance upon him, and the great and wise frequent his fine house. He is happy and brilliant. His communion with Heaven is daily so cheerful and long, so charged with gladness and intense peace, that no one can imagine he could ever have been unhappy. His many duties and much work glide on so smoothly on the tide of circumstances that no one can think he ever had to make an effort for doing what he ought to do. His outward calmness, and ease, and absence of struggle, seem to have come down upon him as if from the heavens. Now at forty he is the emblem of cheerful piety, glad resignation, successful devotion, and prosperous service. Joy is his, and love and honour, and everything that ought to make life delightful. People imagine that they have only to feel the wish to be like him. Those who now see how his whole being has flowered, cannot think in what weeping and sweating, pain, solitude, and poverty he sowed the seeds of a strict and great moral character. Those who look at the fulness, and colour, proportion, and dignity wherewith he is now invested, cannot dream of the stern skeleton of rigorous morality which God has now clothed with the tender blossoms, foliage, and fruits of the heavenly religion of love. My advice to both the young and old in Bengal is that they must practise his morality if

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they want to share his peace. Victory and joy belong to character; God helps him who saves his conscience in all things."

Not that his morality at any stage of its formation was without the influence of religion, but his religion, when he was a very young man, was stern stoical, and colorless like his morality. From the very first he believed in the supreme necessity of prayer. "I did not know what the right religion was, I did not know what the true church was. Why or for what I prayed I did not know, but in the first glimmer of light that came to me I heard the voice, 'Pray, pray, without prayer there is no other way."* He did not see many Christian teachers at the time, but the two or three he was intimate with, were representative men. One of them was the Rev. T. H. Burns, Domestic Chaplain to Bishop Cotton, a devout excellent young man who read the New Testament to us from the Greek, translating the text into English as he proceeded with the reading. Another was the Rev. J. Long, the veteran worker of the Church Missionary Society and distinguished Benagli scholar, whose interest in the youth of Calcutta at the time was most sincere. The third was no other than our old friend, the Rev. C. H. A. Dall, of the American Unitarian Mission. How much spiritual benefit Keshub derived from the acquaintance of these men it is impossible to say. No doubt they were helpful to his progress, but the Christian influence they exercised in the formation of his character, was outwardly speaking, very intangible. With the aid of these gentlemen, and with some of his friends, Keshub established about this time a literary society, called the British India Society, with the somewhat pompous object of "the culture of literature and science." Here religious subjects were sometimes discussed, and we all witnessed with a great deal of amusement the somewhat furious passages at arms between Mr. Long and Mr. Dall, both of them so recently deceased. Mr. Long, who was a Low Churchman, square-built, under-sized, red-faced, and short-tempered, tried in a husky voice, and brief nervous sentences, to silence his heretical opponent. Mr. Dall was a pale, lank, long-legged Yankee, who in disjointed nasal vocabulary, uttered sharp retorts, and irritated his antagonist by invariably styling him "Our Brother Long!" This literary society represented only a particle of Keshub's activity at the time. It had been preceded by a multitude of classes, clubs, and organisations of all sorts, which he started for the benefit

Jeevan Veda, Chap. I.

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of his companions. The object of all these things was literary improvement. Keshub's elder brother Nobin Chunder Sen, was constituted into the supreme authority over such institutions. An elder brother, in those days, was credited with natural omniscience, and we thought it was great condescension on his part to take interest in us poor youngsters. We seldom saw Nobin Babu in flesh and blood, he moved in the remote regions and upper stories of the large family mansion, but his criticisms and decisions, always inscribed in blue ink on the margin of our very imperfect English compositions, came down upon us with an oracular effect. Our seniors, that is, the older boys, larger and stronger than ourselves, but about whose intellectual capacity we had exceedingly low opinions, read from Addison's Spectator, and Capt. Richardson's Selections from the British Poets, but the present writer and some of Keshub's smaller cousins, including Norendro Nath Sen, the Editor of the *Indian Mirror*, were always relegated to the lower forms, to read nothing better than Lamb's Tales, and inferior poetry. Keshub, who was the presiding genius, not only arranged and managed our studies, but always insisted on strict propriety, and rigid morals on the part of every one. What exact effect all this infant organisation had upon our minds it is difficult to say at this distance of time, but certainly it prepared the way for more elaborate institutions, the chief of which was the Colutola Evening School, established in 1855. Young men from contiguous neighbourhoods were gathered together, and were instructed in the general branches of knowledge. The present writer and other early associates of Keshub took charge of the teaching, and he was our rector, himself teaching some of the higher branches of English literature. We always paid great attention to moral teaching, and Keshub now and then spoke a few words on religion. We held grand annual exhibitions for the giving away of prizes to the boys, and we always tried to secure some distinguished Englishman to address the meeting on such occasions. Another pursuit of the time must be noticed. The study of Shakespere was the favourite fashion of the educated about this time. Most probably it originated with the late Capt. D. L. Richardson, a poet and famous Shakesperean, who took the most leading part in the education of the Bengali youth of his time, next only to that of David Hare. Every young man took pride in being able to read Shakespere with emphasis and pathos, as taught by Capt. Richardson. But Keshub was content not only to read, but wanted to act, a desire in which we all warmly

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seconded him. We were also supported by our elder relatives. So a stage was improvised, cast-away European clothes were speedily procured from the bazars, and we painted our faces, and got up our parts as best as we could. Keshub played Hamlet most successfully, he had the constitution of the Danish Prince by nature. The present writer took the part of Laertes, while Norendro Nath Sen, who had a thin girlish voice at the time, played Ophelia very feelingly. Considering our age and training, the performance was creditable. We kept up the play from time to time, till Keshub's theatrical propensities developed into the *Bidhaba Bibaha Natak*, a little while afterwards. The Colutola Evening School flourished very well for three or four years, and only disappeared to make room for more important institutions, but while it was still going on, out of its staff of teachers, and advanced students, Keshub established in 1857 another Society, perhaps the most useful and successful of all his juvenile organisations. This he called the Goodwill Fraternity. It was a purely religious institution, the object of which was both theological and devotional. Keshub's melancholy humour found a wholesome vent in reading and speaking before the youthful fraternity. He used to speak from a high pulpit-like desk. Two of his readings we most distinctly remember ; one was Dr. Chalmers's discourse on Enthusiasm, and the other was Theodore Parker's sermon on Inspiration. Keshub's whole nature was full of an intense hidden fire at the time, and his mood accorded well with the violent excitement of the Scotch divine, and the fiery eloquence of the American iconoclast. There is a dreamy recollection in our mind of the first devotional meeting we ever had ; it was before Keshub entered the Brahmo Somaj, it was before the Fraternity was established. One gloomy evening we met in an obscure room of the family house at Colutola, some five or six young men, all relatives and bosom friends, and Keshub was in our midst. We closed the doors, and, in the dim oil-light, each one poured forth his innermost thoughts in sincere prayer. A nameless solemnity, a thrilling reverence filled every heart, the Eternal Spirit of God for the first time seemed a hallowed presence. Keshub spoke, and we all wept, and ejaculated aloud. Strange consequences to the land and people have followed from that first devotional meeting. All those who were present at it have either left or are dead. To us the sole survivor, the remembrance is shadowy, revered, and awful! At the Goodwill Fraternity which continued its activity for full two years, Keshub often preached extempore

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in English with great enthusiasm. Nay, all his intelligence, energy, and moral earnestness became ignited with an ascetic glow that burned fiercely in him. Every young man who heard him became similarly excited He drew men chiefly by his enthusiasm. He spoke loud and long, poured forth a torrent of words and feelings, becoming often hoarse and exhausted at the end of his discourse. On one occasion, we remember, Babu Devendra Nath Tagore attended a meeting of the Goodwill Fraternity, and we saw him for the first time. He was tall, princely, in the full glory of his health and manhood ; he came attended by liveried servants, and surrounded by massive stalwart Brahmos, who wore long gold chains, and impenetrable countenances. We, who were very young men, and not initiated in the Brahmo Somaj secrets at all, were highly elated and encouraged by such company, and it was an inducement to us to follow with zeal our religious career.

In 1857 Keshub quietly entered the Brahmo Somaj by signing the printed covenant sent him for that purpose. This was a somewhat private arrangement. The ordinary usage for an intending convert was to stand up before the pulpit at the end of the monthly morning service, and make a declaration of faith before the minister and congregation. The document was then signed by the candidate for initiation, and countersigned by the *Pravartaka*, or the person who induced him to accept the religion of the Brahmo Somaj. But in Keshub's case, a simple declaration in writing "admitting the truth of the principles of *Brahmo Dharma*, and solemnly avowing faith in them" was sufficient. He describes his conversion in one of his lectures in England, thus:—

"English education unsettled my mind, and left a void; I had given up idolatry, but had received no positive system of faith to replace it. And how could one live on earth without a system of positive religion? At last it pleased Providence to reveal Himself unto me. I had not a single friend to speak to me of religion, God, and immortality. I was passing from idolatry into utter worldliness. Through Divine grace, however, I felt a longing for something higher; the consciousness of sin was awakened within me, sin was realised in the depth of my heart in all its enormity and blackness. And was there no remedy? Could I continue to bear life as a burden? Heaven said, 'No! Sinner, thou hast hope;' and I looked upward and there was a clear revelation to me. I felt that I was not groping in the dark as a helpless child, cast away by his parents in some dreary wilderness. I felt that I had a Heavenly Friend always near to succour me. God Himself told me this; no book, no teacher but God Himself, in the secret recesses of my heart. God spoke to me in unmistakable language, and gave me the secret of spiritual life, and that was prayer, to which I owned my conversion. I at once composed

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forms of prayer for every morning and evening, and used them daily, although I was still a member of no Church on earth, and had no clear apprehension of God's character and attributes. I felt profoundly the efficacy of prayer in my own experience. I grew in wisdom, purity, and love. But after this I felt the need of the communion of friends, from whom I might be enabled, in times of difficulty and doubt, to receive spiritual assistance and comfort. So I felt that not only belief in God was necessary but I wanted a real brotherhood on earth. Where was this true Church to be found? I did not know. Well, I established in my earlier days a small fraternity, in my own house, to which I gave the somewhat singular but significant name of 'The Goodwill Fraternity.' I did not allow myself for one moment to harbour sectarianism, but preached to my friends these two doctrines —God our Father, every man our brother. When I felt that I wanted a Church, I found that the existing sects and churches would not answer my purpose. A small publication of the Calcutta Brahmo Somaj fell into my hands, and as I read the chapter on 'What is Brahmoism?' I found that it corresponded exactly with the inner conviction of my heart, the voice of God in the soul. I always felt that every outward book must be subordinated to the teachings of the Inner Spirit,—that where God speaks through the Spirit in man all earthly teachers must be silent, and every man must bow down and accept in reverence what God thus revealed in the soul. I at once determined that I would join the Brahmo Somaj, or Indian Theistic Church."

His mind had in fact received the awakening knowledge of moral and mental philosophy, and his conversion had more of the moral and intellectual in it, than the purely religious. "Philosophy," says he, "first taught me insight and reflection, and turned my eyes inward from the things of the external world, so that I began to reflect on my position, character, and destiny." He was a pretty hard reader in those days. From eleven o'clock in the morning till about six o'clock in the evening, he read regularly every day in Metcalfe Hall, which is the only large public library we have in Calcutta. He read theological and metaphysical works mostly, the history of philosophy being his delight. He read some poetry such as Milton and Young, he gloried in Shakespeare at all times, but he hated novels of all kinds. He was an intense admirer of Sir William Hamilton, and pored over the works of Victor Cousin. He read J. E. D. Morell and M'Cosh; loved the Works of Theodore Parker, Miss Cobbe, and praised Emerson. He was a versatile and voracious reader in those days. His mind had already formed the elementary conceptions of religion before he knew anything of the Brahmo Somaj. The fact is that the characteristic doctrines of Christianity, of which he must have known somewhat, made no impression upon him, and Hinduism he quietly discarded. "In utter helplessness," says he, "I threw myself at my Father's feet. And at last it

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pleased Providence to reveal the light of truth to me in a most mysterious manner, and from that time commenced a series of struggles, aspirations, and endeavours which resulted, I am happy to say, in peace, and in the conversion of the heart." There lived at the time in our neighbourhood at Colutola a *Pandit* named Rajballav. He was the chief vernacular tutor of a local school, and being much older than every one of us, and being also a Sanskrit scholar, he had dabbled in the literature of the Brahmo Somaj. Keshub was always fond of older and more serious men than his own companions; he had frequent communions with Pandit Rajballav, and the latter probably lent him "the small publication of the Calcutta Brahmo Somaj," in which he read the chapter, "What is Brahmoism," and found that inner correspondence of spirit which he calls "revelation in a mysterious manner." He signed the Brahmo Somaj covenant privately, when Devendra Nath Tagore was on the hills, but shortly afterwards the latter returned to Calcutta, and was much pleased to hear of Keshub's conversion. Devendra had always tried to persuade young men of influential famililes to join the Brahmo Somaj, and it was an unexpected pleasure to him that a member of the orthodox Sen family had spontaneously enlisted himself as a Brahmo. Devendra Nath Tagore's second son, Satyendra Nath Tagore, now a distinguished member of the Bombay Civil Service, was Keshub's fellow-student in the Hindu College, with whom he now and then had conversations, and through whom also he communicated with his illustrious father. A cordial interest in Keshub thus sprang up in the *Pradhan Acharya's* mind, and through various circumstances the interest ripened into personal affection, sufficiently evidenced by Devendra Nath Tagore's visit to the meeting of the Goodwill Fraternity already alluded to. One of these circumstances was the first great moral struggle which his enlistment in the Brahmo Somaj produced in Keshub's life.

Keshub speaks of "struggles and endeavours which led to the conversion of his heart." The first trial which he was called upon to undergo was within a year of his entering the Brahmo Somaj. The family *guru* paid an occasional visit to the Sens at Colutola. The *guru*, we may mention for the information of our European readers, is an idolatrous Brahmin credited with high and exceptional sanctity, who holds the hereditary function of directing the spiritual destinies of a Hindu family. He is invested both with the function and the sanctity more by virtue of his birth than by actual attainment.

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The *guru* is often a very bad man. But his disciples, both male and female, adore him as perfectly divine. He lives upon the gifts and tributes of the orthodox families over whom he presides. He celebrates, during his periodical visits, the rites of initiation in religion over the young, absolution from sin over the old, and spiritual efficacy over all. Dishonour or indifference to him is a mortal sin. The *guru* came to the residence of the Sen family some time in 1858, and a number of young men were marked for the ceremony of initiation. Keshub, who was one among them, showed symptoms by which the guardians suspected he would make trouble over the matter. But they were determined on the point, it was a matter of family prestige, and they had decided that Keshub must yield. They had not sufficiently calculated upon the power of resistance which was in that quiet young man. He had indirectly expressed his disinclination before his mother, and felt that a great crisis of faith had come for him. He had made up his mind, but still to try the correctness of his resolution he had called upon Devendra Nath Tagore at Jorasanko for the purpose of taking his opinion. To the honour of the latter be it said, that in view of the serious consequences which Keshub's refusal to accept the idolatrous baptism would surely cause, he declined to give any direct advice, but Keshub nevertheless felt what course he would approve. On the next day great preparations were made at the house of the Sens for the initiation. Keshub's cousins had all gone through the ceremony, and now it was the young reformer's turn. The guardians assembled on the spot headed by his uncle, the late Babu Hari Mohan Sen, who was a man of stern and fiery temperament, the terror of the whole household. Keshub was sent for. Quiet, gentle, and self-possessed, he came. They put him the fatal question. "Wilt thou accept the ceremony of initiation as the other young men have done?" "No," he replied calmly, but with a firmness which was unmistakable. More than once the question was repeated with increasing fierceness. Keshub's determination did not shake. He was gentle, but immovable. The stalwart guardians of the orthodoxy of the Sens were baffled, Keshub's quiet firmness disarmed their violence, they were defeated for the first time, and they were defeated ever afterwards. Keshub returned to his room in righteous exultation, wondering at his success. When next day Devendra Nath Tagore sent his son to enquire into the issue of the dread contest, and received the intelligence of the young Brahmo's victory of faith, the congratulations which Keshub met from him were the first instal-

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ment of the unexampled friendship which silently grew up between the two men afterwards. Thus it was that Keshub scored his first triumph over idolatry and persecution. Such a struggle at the present day would not amount to much. But when it was first made, unstimulated by any example, unbefriended by any sympathy, under circumstances whose difficulty can only be felt by those who witnessed it, Keshub's heroic resistance gave an earnest of the moral greatness he was to achieve hereafter.

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CHAPTER V.

MENTAL AND MORAL ACTIVITIES.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN IN THE *Adi Brahmo Somaj* (1859 TO 1866).

KESHUB'S sombre self-introspection burst into wholesome activity when, in April, 1859, the Brahmo School was established. It would almost seem that he entered the Brahmo Somaj not to learn but to teach. The fact is, he had been teaching himself by close study and reflection for the last three or four years, and as soon as his association with Devendra Nath Tagore took the form of practical sympathy, they concerted together a plan of action for the public good. The plan in the beginning was that Keshub should deliver a series of English lectures, and Devendra Nath a similar course in the vernacular, the former taking up the philosophy of Theism, and the latter dealing with the doctrines and theology of the Brahmo Somaj. This Brahmo School was an all-important institution in the history of the whole Brahmo movement. It not only produced a body of intelligent doctrines, and systematised the uncertain conceptions of Brahmo Theism on a sound rational basis of philosophy, such as modern thought throughout the world laid down to be the rudiments of all religion, but it created a nucleus of well-trained men whose sympathy, devotedness, and active co-operation made all future progress in the Brahmo Somaj possible. About a dozen such men, all in the prime of youth, some of whom are still missionaries of the Brahmo Somaj of India, gathered at the first meeting which took place on the 24th April, 1859, in a damp and dingy one-storied house, where the Colutola Evening School held its classes, not far from the ancestral residence of the Sens in Bhavani Charan Dutt's Lane, Colutola, Calcutta. Nothing could exceed the zeal, energy, faith, and cheerfulness with which Keshub set about the work of organising his youthful adherents into the new school. The Goodwill Fraternity contributed its members, the Evening School its teachers and senior pupils to that object, and both in the course of time dissolved into the higher purposes of the Brahmo School.

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Devendra readily came, unmindful of surroundings, and began by teaching the young men the rules of the Sanskrit recitation of the Brahmo Somaj liturgy, whereby they might join the services then held every Wednesday evening at Jorasanko. The school, holding weekly classes on Sundays, was soon removed to more respectable quarters at Chitpore Road, in a grand building, known as Gopal Mallick's house, which has been since demolished, and thence to the second floor rooms of the *Adi Brahmo Somaj* at Jorasanko. Keshub in his lectures, delivered on every alternate Sunday, poured forth a torrent of metaphysics and moral fervour, and Devendra Nath in chaste classical Bengali discoursed on the opinions and faith of the Brahmo Somaj. The latter discourses have been embodied in a useful treatise called *Brahmo Dharmer Mata O Biswas*, while Keshub utilised the substance of his addresses in the tracts which before long he began to publish. The school held annual examinations and gave diplomas of merit. The questions set were sometimes so difficult, that a professor of the Presidency College is once said to have observed that any one, who could answer them satisfactorily, might be admitted to the M.A. degree of the Calcutta University, without passing through the preliminary examinations. Perhaps Keshub's metaphysics at the time were not of the maturest kind, and his object was to teach more by aspiration, more by awakening the faculties of his youthful associates, than by actual professorship. And his methods were eminently successful. His enthusiasm and earnestness bore down every obstacle, his singular intelligence kindled a corresponding glow in every hearer. Very imperfectly educated as we were, if our understanding sometimes failed to grasp the import of his teaching, our sympathies supplied the deficiency. Both the head and the heart were equally active. Thus for five years the Brahmo School trained up the youth of the Somaj, spreading religious knowledge, and enlightenment of character.

In the splendid structure at Chitpore Road, to which the Brahmo School was removed in 1859, Keshub found a somewhat unexpected occupation. He was entrusted with the management of an institution very different from the Brahmo School. It was a dramatic club to put on the stage *Bidhava Bibaha Natak* (widow-marriage drama), written with the object of reforming the cruel custom of the forced celibacy of young Hindu widows. By repeated representations of Hamlet, and other performances half musical, half dramatic, Keshub had developed such a talent for stage management, that the

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gentlemen who projected this company, most of them our relatives and neighbours, seniors to us in age, implicitly trusted Keshub with the sole charge of the new undertaking. Keshub's love for Shakespere, and for good dramas in general, was unbounded, it was one of those dispositions which his early asceticism never wholly effaced, strange as that may seem, and which adhered to him till the last day of his life. He always looked upon dramatic representation not only as a most enlightened form of public amusement, but also as a most potent agency for the reformation of social evils. Abstemious in his own personal habits, he never grudged to the community its legitimate share of rational recreation. Natural, innocent joyousness he held to be the safety-valve of a hundred ill-humours in the human mind, also as a great force by which an individual and a nation might be raised to the most exalted ideals. To all those motives was added the intense sympathy he felt with the cause of the remarriage of Hindu widows. Since the inauguration of the widow marriage reform in 1856, Keshub, though then a very young man, wished well to the cause, and did what he could to contribute to its success. He therefore cheerfully accepted the management of the Widow Marriage Drama. Four institutions now ran abreast of each other under Keshub's supervision. There was the Colutolah Evening School, the Goodwill Fraternity, the Brahmo School, and the Theatre at Chitpore Road. As nearly the same individuals comprised the staff of them all, it was sometimes amusing and perplexing to hear the several bells ring almost simultaneously for the classes of the first, the services of the second, the lectures of the third, and the rehearsals of the fourth! But Keshub's zeal and energy knew no bounds. He was very different in appearance then from what he was in the latter years of his life. He was thin, gaunt, tall, pale, with vertigo in his head, and swellings about his feet. But he was tireless in work and activity. His mechanical skill in the working of the stage rivalled the energy of his intellectual and moral achievements. The harmony of forces presented itself in his character so early as that. The plot of the drama was the miserable life of a Hindu widow shut up in the zenana, who, in her solitary friendless condition, formed an attachment to a young neighbour, by whom she was led to a course of sin. The concluding scenes depicted her sufferings, her suicide, her confessions, with appeals to all patriotic men to put an end to the cruel celibacy of Hindu widows. The performance was first opened to the

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public in the beginning of 1859, and produced a sensation in Calcutta, which those who witnessed it, can never forget. The representatives of the highest classes of Hindu society were present. The pioneer and father of the widow marriage movement, Pandit Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar came more than once, and tender-hearted as he is, was moved to floods of tears. In fact there was scarcely a dry eye in the great audience. Undoubtedly the most wholesome effect was produced. Keshub, as stage-manager, was warmly complimented on his energy and intelligence, and we, his friends, as amateur actors, who had done our best, also received our humble share of praise. Though this dramatic success brought Keshub a good deal before the public, in that dawn and flush of his spiritual character the occupation of a stage-manager could not but soon grow uncongenial. He and his companions were often thrown into heterogenous company ; some of the parts played were undoubtedly harmful in their moral tendency ; there was inevitable dissipation, frivolity, and a dangerous love of public applause. So before the end of the year, the theatre was given up completely, and Keshub turned his attention to more serious and important subjects.

Nevertheless, it was some time before he could wholly devote himself to the great projects he had been long planning in his restless mind. The rule for every young Hindu was to earn some income as soon as he had gone through what was called his education. And Keshub's guardians, who had not failed to take early notice of the transcendental dispositions he often manifested, were all the more anxious to put upon him the wholesome harness of some hard routine work as soon as they could find an opportunity. So in the midst of the various activities which surrounded him in 1859, Keshub was installed into a clerkship in the Bank of Bengal, with the somewhat undignified salary of Rs. 25 per month. The Bank of Bengal* and the Calcutta Mint, of which Keshub's grandfather† was the Native head, formed a sort of family preserve for the younger generation of the Sens, their relatives, and castemen. No sooner than a youthful Sen, imperfectly fledged for official flights, had finished his lessons at school, or proved himself incapable of learning anything there, he was drafted into the unexalted ranks of financial life at the bottom of the Mint, or the Bank of Bengal. Keshub, however, did not refuse the

*The present Imperial Bank of India.
†Dewan Ram Kamal Sen.

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humble post offered him. He worked away at it with his characteristic zeal, and drew the attention of his European superiors. The employeés of the Bank in those days, including the present writer, can never forget the calm, unimpassioned, handsome face at the left of the Dewan's desk, intent upon every duty, yet always ready with a smile of welcome or recognition to every friendly fellow-clerk as he passed. So well and faithfully did Keshub do his work that, before a twelvemonth had passed, his salary was doubled, and his duties lay immediately with the Deputy Secretary Mr. Cooke. His speedy promotion now became a certainty. Yet the native independence of character never left him for a day. The Secretary and Treasurer of the Bank of Bengal at the time was a Mr. George Dickson, a colossal, autocratic, irascible Scotchman, dreaded by everybody. He issued an order one day that every clerk must make a solemn affirmation never to give out before outsiders any information of the Bank's affairs. The order was indefinite, and included all information, and every fact, important or otherwise. As a matter of course everybody signed, only Keshub refused, and the present writer followed his example. The Dewan of the Bank was a relative, but he was highly incensed at this act of insubordination. He took us both to Mr. Dickson's room, a place of awe to every clerk, a sort of lion's den, and describing our unwillingness to sign the affirmation, retired, left us to our fate. Mr. Dickson regarded us for a moment with amused curiosity, and asked why we had refused. Keshub distinguished in appearance, courtly in manners, and fearless in bearing, at once replied that he had "conscientious scruples," explaining that it was impossible to work in the Bank, and never to talk of its affairs to any one, at any time. Struck with the sincerity of the apology, the awful Mr. Dickson unbent and smiled, and let us go without signing the affirmation at all. The Dewan and everybody else was astonished at the result, and at Keshub's pluck, who became thenceforth a greater favourite than ever. Thus the prospects of his official life steadily improved, and the Bank authorities placed increasing confidence in his capacities. But Keshub's heart was not in the Bank of Bengal, it was in the Brahmo Somaj, in the lectures he was giving to the newly formed Brahmo School, in the tracts which he had begun to bring out in rapid succession in 1860. The thought preyed upon his mind whether he should not throw up his appointment, and devote himself to these things exclusively. This, however, would be an unprecedented course.

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No young man had, ever before this, thought of giving up his income and prospects for the sake of writing theological tracts, and given metaphysical lectures which never brought a farthing's remuneration. The originality of the resolution never daunted him, and in July 1861 Keshub resigned his post in the Bank of Bengal. Strong remonstrances from friends and guardians, pointing out the magnitude of the sacrifice he made, availed nothing. The hopes held out by the authorities of the Bank, and the regrets then expressed at his resolution, did not make him waver for a moment. Keshub had made up his mind, and stuck to his decision. Thus closed his short secular career. Once again in 1867, for a month or two, he consented to serve in the Calcutta Mint. But this was in strict obedience to a sense of duty. It was not in his own interest at all, but to preserve the interest of the family in the post of bullion-keeper which had been held by the Sens for successive generations. Keshub vacated the place as soon as the permanent incumbent was found. The far-reaching consequences of this renunciation are evidenced in the devoted men who, thenceforward, following his example, have forsaken all worldly prospects to serve the Church. The calling of the Brahmo Missionary, as separated from all earthly callings, as renouncing every motive of gain, as depending upon Providence alone for food and raiment, was in this manner first created.

The year 1860 saw the publication of Keshub's first tract entitled "Young Bengal, This is for you," which was followed by about a dozen others. These tracts give a very complete view of the elementary principles and beliefs, upon which it pleased Providence to rear the noble structure of Keshub Chunder Sen's religious character. He began the first tract by noticing the transition which the young men of his time presented after the period of scepticism and irreligion which "a godless education," given in Government schools, produced. "Not only has this godless education shed a baneful influence upon the individual, but it has proved an effective engine in counteracting, to no small extent, the social advancement of the people, and in rendering more frightful the intellectual, domestic and moral institutions of the millions of our countrymen. * * Rest assured, my friend, if in our country intellectual progress went hand in hand with religious development, if our educated countrymen had initiated themselves in the living truths of religion, patriotism would not have been a matter of mere oration and essay, but a reality in practice." Thus in 1860, in his first published writing, when he was twenty-

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two years old, Keshub laid down the principle on which he carried on the whole work of his reform, intellectual, social, domestic and religious. "Living truths" he perceived so early as that, and they opened out to him the fiery course which he followed with untiring fidelity for the next twenty-four years, till his life ended. He seems almost to be addressing and blessing himself as he concludes thus:—"Go on, my dear brother, go on in the hallowed course you have begun. Muster up your solemn resolves, and advance steadily, turning neither to the right, nor to the left. Difficulties will meet you in the way, temptations will entice you, * * Conduct yourself with wariness and constancy, strength and enthusiasm, but above all with thorough resignation to the Divine will. Steadily and prayerfully look up to Him, our Light, our Strength, our Father, and our Friend. He will fill your mind with saving knowledge, your heart with the sweets of love, your soul with purity, and your hands with strength and courage. Retain Him in the depths of your heart, and affectionately cling to Him all the days of your life. 'He will make you a defenced city, a column of steel, and walls of brass.'" The second tract is a dialogue on the subject of Prayer, illustrating its "spontaneity, necessity, and utility." He strongly repudiates the idea of "logically proving the propriety of prayer." His whole argument is condensed in one sentence. "As I ask mortal man for food because it is essential to the sustenance of my body, so I pray to my God for spiritual blessings which are essential to the sustenance of my soul. In both cases a deep want, a pressing and irresistible necessity is the origin of prayer: in neither is there any reference to logic." He spoke times without number on the all-important theme of prayer, but always rested his argument on this irresistible spontaneity. In short, these thirteen tracts most successfully embody the substance of his lectures in the Brahmo school. The burden of the philosophical part of that teaching was the doctrine of Intuitions. These he calls otherwise "the Basis of Brahmoism." He defines them as "those principles of the mind which are above, anterior to, and independent of reflection," as "those cognitions which our nature immediately apprehends"—"the facts of our constitution which we cannot create or destroy." He names the intuitions of "Cause, Substance, Power, Infinity, Duty as immediately apprehensible." He gives a vast array of philosophical authorities and quotations to prove the validity of these intuitions, as the basis of the religion of the Brahmo Somaj. And that basis remains intact until to-day. It is remarkable how in some of his earliest

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utterances he foreshadows the great developments of spirituality he subsequently attained. The doctrine of Inspiration is thus outlined in the second tract, "Be Prayerful," published in July, 1860. "When thus brought into His holy presence, the sins, sorrows, and vexations of the world cannot encroach upon us; * * the soul feels itself in the midst of Holiness, and drinks of the sweets of pure Divine communion, and enjoys a serenity and a bliss unspeakable. It forgets its own weakness, and is *inspired* with heavenly fire and enthusiasm. Thus *inspired*, man walks in the path of life with invincible courage, and unyielding resoluteness, fearing no earthly potentate, for Omnipotence is on his side, yet loving all, for his soul is filled with brotherly affection—magnifying the name of the Creator with fiery eloquence." Keshub's characteristic doctrines of seeing, hearing, and feeling God, elaborated in his famous lecture on God-Vision in 1880, are prefigured in the third tract published in September, 1860. "How animating is the Brahmo's knowledge of God! He does not worship an abstract, metaphysical idea of the Divinity, destitute of charms and lifeless. * * His God is neither a logical nor a historical divinity. His God is an ever-present and ever-living Reality that can be *seen* and *felt*. He stands before his Father face to face. He *beholds* Him who is infinite in time and space, wisdom and power, love and holiness, and is at once enlivened and enraptured." Have not these utterances, made more than quarter of a century ago, the mystic ring of Keshub's latest teaching? The development is systematic, there is a singular likeness between the first and last stages. The reader ought to remember that there was no antecedent Brahmo literature from which a single atom of the sentiments or expressions quoted could be borrowed. Keshub created that literature, and it was thus he laid down the first rudiments.

In the summer of 1860 Keshub went to Krishnagar on his first missionary expedition, the forerunner of so much endless propagandistic activity in the Brahmo Somaj. He was accompanied by some members of Devendra Nath Tagore's family, and they all put up in the house of Babu Ramlochan Ghose, the father of our distinguished fellow-citizens, Messrs. Manmohan and Lalmohan Ghose. The visit was not ostensibly missionary in its character; it was a sort of pleasure trip, but Keshub had it in his mind to make an attempt to propagate in public lectures the religion of the Brahmo Somaj. His discourses in the Brahmo school had already gained him a reputation for eloquence. He had become very popular among young

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men of his own age, the educated community of Bengalis looked upon him with considerable interest, and the Christian missionaries, who had an eye to his 'conversion' regarded his progress with anxious jealousy. Keshub's offer to give public lectures on religion was therefore hailed with enthusiasm by the young men and leaders of Hindu society in Krishnagar. Now Krishnagar is an ancient town. It has grown under the refining influence of a long line of Hindu princes, one of whom, Rajah Krishna Chandra Ray, after whom the town is named, maintained a most learned court, and extensively patronised both classical and provincial literature. Its inhabitants are noted in Bengal for intelligence and public spirit. After the original Brahmo Somaj of Raja Rammohan Roy, the second similar institution, ever established in the country, was at Krishnagar. The Christian missionaries therefore made this town one of their strongholds. And when Keshub's extempore lectures, altogether an original style of propagation at the time, drew large audiences, the presiding Trinitarian missionary, Mr. Dyson, found it necessary to deliver counter-lectures. This was the first beginning of that controversy between Keshub and the Christian missionaries which ended not in antagonism, but in closer sympathy afterwards. Nothing roused Keshub's nature so much as opposition, and Mr. Dyson instead of being able to crush the rising influence of the young man, fanned the flame of his fierce energy. Keshub spoke till his lungs were about to burst, and medical men ordered him to stop. All Krishnagar sided with the Brahmo reformer. The orthodox *Pandits* formally thanked him for vanquishing the Christian missionary, who was regarded as the common foe of all Hindus. Keshub came out with flying colours. The theological warfare, raging in a provincial lecture-room, was soon carried on to Calcutta, and reduced to the more permanent form of tracts and treatises. Keshub wrote a short missionary epistle in Bengali to Devendra Nath, which the latter caused to be published in the *Tatwabodhini Patrika*, at that time the only organ of the Brahmo Somaj, describing the progress of his work. His success was so great that his sentiments were full of confidence and exultation, implying a promise of future operations, which some ill-natured elderly Brahmo critics, for Keshub's genius had already begun to provoke a lively jealousy in the Somaj, construed into egotism. But Devendra Nath, the wise leader, understood his young disciple much better, and gave him every encouragement and opportunity to develop his powers. The results of the controversy

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were embodied by Keshub in his concluding tracts on the philosophical basis of Brahmoism, while Mr. Dyson matured the lectures delivered by himself, in his treatise on *Brahmic Intuitions*, comprising for a long time the stock argument of a class of Christian missionaries against the principles of the Brahmo Somaj. As Keshub's opponent, Mr. Dyson acquired great prominence from this time, and rose into a position which perhaps he would not have otherwise attained. He was followed by other Christian controversialists, and the discussions created great sensation for some time. But we must not anticipate events. Keshub's first missionary efforts were thus prolific. Over and above his other qualities, the courage and energy with which he fought these theological battles of the Brahmo Somaj, endeared him to his generous leader more than the latter ever expressed. Their relations were every day becoming more and more intimate. And the evidence of these new relations was furnished in a singular and unprecedented adventure in which Keshub had engaged himself about this time.

This was an expedition to Ceylon. Babu Devendra Nath was about to leave for that island with two of his sons on a sea-voyage, and invited Keshub to join the party. He readily consented, but he knew he could never obtain the permission of the family to launch into such an enterprise, which, not to speak of the horror every sober Hindu guardian had for the sea, was most flagrantly unorthodox, because every passenger had to eat on board things forbidden, or at least things touched by unclean *mlechha* hands. So Keshub determined upon a clandestine departure. He was living at the time at a convenient distance from the family-house, in a garden in the suburbs of Calcutta, and without letting anybody know about his intention he quietly embarked one morning with his friends, leaving behind a little note which was discovered after the vessel had left. His relatives and friends were astounded at his sudden disappearance, and the boldness and skilfulness with which it was managed. Acccording to Bengali household notions such conduct violated every principle of obedience and respectability. The thing was monstrous to Hindu eyes. The sensation caused was very great, the family at Colutola was in an uproar, and the shock to us, his boyish companions, was so great that we clung to each other's necks, and piteously wept! His little wife, who was not more than twelve or thirteen years old at the time, was dangerously ill, and not a syllable about Keshub's perilous expedition had reached her, till he had gone far on his way. We all took it to heart, and in our bitter regret

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accused him of cruelty, undutifulness, and all sorts of things. But Keshub in the meanwhile, let out, like an uncaged bird, enjoyed his trip most heartily, cracked fun with his companions, kept a lively diary, and felt he had done the most proper and natural thing in the world. This joint expedition to Ceylon was not undertaken for any missionary purpose, but it had one great effect upon the Brahmo Somaj, it cemented the relations between Keshub Chunder Sen and Devendra Nath Tagore into a bond of friendship, about which we shall have to say more, by and bye. Keshub returned from Ceylon refreshed in body and mind, with increased ardour for work, and a heightened spirit of enterprise.*

Keshub's activities at this period, however, were not exhausted by expeditions, lectures, and theological labours. He infused into the Brahmo community the public spirit of philanthropy to come forward and join the benevolent movements of the day. In 1860, owing to deficient crops, a dreadful famine visited large tracts of Upper India, and the prominent men of Calcutta, both Hindu and European, did what they could to awaken public sympathy with the sufferings of the stricken poor. Religious services were held, and collections made in Christian churches, Government opened relief measures, appeals were made through newspapers for subscriptions, and Dr. Duff, then in the height of his power and influence, made great orations in every part of the town. Hitherto the Brahmo Somaj had never considered it a duty to mix in such movements. But Keshub instinctively perceived the necessity and moral fitness of taking part in them, and advised a famine relief service which Devendra Nath at once held with great demonstration. How well we remember the hillocks of unboiled rice, and huge salvers filled with silver coins contributed by the family of the *Pradhan Acharya.* The poorer

For detailed accounts, refer to Keshub Chunder Sen's Diary (Ceylon) which ends with the following prayer :—

"Accept, Dear Lord, my humble yet hearty thanksgiving for this safe return for my voyage and for the invaluable advantages Thou hast enabled me to reap from it. By it, Thou hast given me an enlarged spirit and an exalted soul!———nobler thoughts and higher aspirations ———a love of all that is grand and Catholic and true and an aversion to what is limited and mean and unsubstantial———and above all, a love towards man as a brother and towards Thee as an affectionate Father. Father, may I serve Thee and glorify Thy name with increasing zeal and earnestness and make truth the centre of my thought and actions. May, I, by Thy grace and the help of those great ideas with which Thou hast filled my mind, grow day by day in grace and holiness. Hail Fatherland! Hail!" (Diary in Ceylon, 1859, p. 83).

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part of the congregation, and we, young men, were not idle. We gave, every one his utmost, both in coin and kind. The men filled bags with copper coins, soliciting aid from everybody they met, the women parted with their jewels and clothes, and odds and ends of every description were brought in that could be converted into money to buy food for the hungry and dying. That was a blessed sight, the poor helping the poor, and the youthful ardent band of young men headed by Keshub, throwing their generous impulses into the cause of genuine charity. This charitable undertaking, first undertaken in 1860, opened the door to quite a new order of activity in the Brahmo Somaj. We find, in the next year, services held to take collections, and organisations were set on foot, to relieve the victims of the epidemic fever, which from that year began to rage in the village of Lower Bengal, and decimated the population. Government aid and private agencies were inadequate to save the sufferers. Under the advice and guidance of Keshub Chunder Sen, the Brahmo Somaj advanced to rescue the country. The Branch Somajes imitated the laudable example, and a considerable amount of relief in the form of money and medical treatment was meted out to the poor.

A somewhat singular little Society was started by Keshub about this time under the name of the *Sangat Sava*. It was mainly for religious conversation, though occasionally there was prayer, and the influence it exercised upon the minds and lives of those who attended it was remarkable. Strange earnestness characterised every proceeding; all the members were sturdy young men, steadfast followers of Keshub, the quintessence of the Brahmo school where he lectured, and the old Goodwill Fraternity. They met frequently, and with fiery zeal for self-reformation, laid bare their whole hearts, freely and frankly discussed their own faults, courted mutual aid and criticism, and under Keshub's guidance made most genuine progress in spiritual and moral life. Hunger and fatigue seemed to have no power over them. They sat up the whole night, from the evening to the morning twilight, in Keshub's room in a corner of the large family house of the Sens of Colutola, comparing experiences, practising penitence, making resolutions, offering prayers. They were, as if apart from, and above the rest of the world, themselves and their youthful leader their own world. They were young men fresh from the colleges, the hope of their parents, the source of support to their families, and their guardians and friends took considerable alarm at their indiscreet enthusiasm. But in them Keshub found congenial

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spirits ; he magnetised them ; they magnetised him ; and together they formed a nucleus of organisation, out of which the best materials of Keshub's subsequent movements were supplied. The oldest Brahmo missionaries trace the change of their characters, the formation of their ideals, the dawning of their aspirations, the formation of the objects of their lives, to the *Sangat Sava*. The foundations of the apostolic brotherhood for which Keshub laboured so incessantly afterwards, which took form years afterwards in the Brahmo Somaj Mission Office, in the *Bharat Asram*, the *Mangal Bari* neighbourhood, the *Apostolic Darbar*, were first laid in mutual love and confidence in the *Sangat Sava*. The youthful enthusiasts then knew no guile, felt no jealousy, had no ambition, found no conflict of worldly interests. Religion was new to them, they were new to each other, a great burning repentance for past sins purified the very bottom of their hearts, joint prayers knit them together, the love of truth and progress excited them like new wine. Keshub's eloquence and example fired them up, as they fired him, he poured into them the deepest principles of his character, they presented the finest elements of a rising church, they were the pride and ornament of the Brahmo Somaj. Devendra Nath Tagore was to them gracious like a father, gave them preference and precedence before every other Brahmo, rested in them every hope of the future. In fact it was he who first gave them the name of the *Sangat* after the manner of the *Sikhs*. They formed an apostolical fraternity without the self-consciousness of some of the later apostles, they formed the materials of a divine dispensation without the exclusiveness and bigotry which has characterized a good many Brahmo dispensationists subsequently. Such was the *Sangat Sava*. And when Keshub signalised his career by the renunciation of his worldly prospects, and resigned his post in the Bank of Bengal, the *Sangat Sava* received him with the open arms of sympathy and admiration. In it he found the comfort, the reward, and the response of his first self-denial. The sacrificial fire lighted by his example burnt a kindred flame in the young hearts which surrounded him. One act of true renunciation provokes a hundred others. The men of the *Sangat* soon began to take counsel who should follow Keshub's footsteps, and devote themselves to the service of the Church. One after another began to take leave of secular life, till the Brahmo Somaj came to possess a powerful body of apostolical workers, all in the prime vigour of life, consecrated with their families to self-sacrifice, determined to spread the spirit and principles

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of Hindu Theism by ceaseless labours throughout the land. The most momentous results have followed such enthusiastic propagation. Keshub's true leadership has been the leadership of such men; his real ministry has been to form the characters, and shape the destinies of such men.

Master of his own time, with unlimited aspirations, and abundant opportunities of every kind, Keshub now not only initiated philanthropic movements of every kind, but also began a correspondence with Theists in other parts of the world. The two best known in England at the time were Mr. Francis William Newman, and Miss Frances Power Cobbe, the former familiar to us as the author of "Theism, Doctrinal and Practical," and the latter known as the writer of two admirable little books, entitled "Religious Duties" and "Intuitive Morals." Mr. Newman was at once ready to enter into practical relations; his long and precisely written letters we all read with delight. Keshub proposed an educational agitation, both in England and India, with the object of starting more efficient colleges and schools than what the Government gave us. Mr. Newman wrote a brochure in the shape of an appeal to the British public, and Keshub convened a great meeting, in October 1861, in the second floor of the Brahmo Somaj building, where he gave a brilliant address. Being excessively alive to the importance of possessing a newspaper organ in English, with a view to influence the Hindu community both on educational, religious, and other matters, he started the *Indian Mirror* in August 1861, in conjunction with some friends as a fortnightly journal. Mr. Monmohan Ghose, now an eminent barrister of Calcutta, was a leading spirit in this undertaking, and both he and Keshub engaged the services of Capt. Palmer, a dilapidated soldier, but a very smart writer of newspaper articles. The only important English newspaper in Calcutta, conducted by a Native editor, in those days was the *Hindu Patriot*, which welcomed the *Mirror* as a brother. There being thus very little competition, the new fortnightly was ably and successfully conducted from the beginning. His position being thus strengthened, Keshub's ambition now was to found a model educational institution. Though the scheme of co-operation between the British and the Indian public for this purpose could not be made to take a practical shape, from this time forward he made single-handed attempts to start a college, where the highest training, both intellectual and moral, should be given to the youth of the land. The first attempt of the kind which he ever made was the establishment of the Calcutta College in 1862. That was

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before almost any other of the existing colleges, started by our countrymen, had been established. In a ricketty old building, not far from the place where the whole population of Calcutta burn their dead, and under the most modest appearances, Keshub opened his college, the only grand thing about it being his faith in its future, and the lofty enthusiasm with which he began its work. His opponents made light of the undertaking, but he knew he was doing a principal work of the mission of his life. Babu Devendra Nath Tagore liberally contributed to set the college afloat, but still Keshub had to borrow money on his personal responsibility to put the institution in working order. Some of Keshub's friends volunteered as honorary teachers, and among the pupils were two of Devendra Nath Tagore's sons, and Keshub's younger brother, Krishna Behari Sen, long the Editor of the *Liberal* newspaper and Rector of the Albert College. Keshub never believed in combining theological teaching with ordinary education, he thought it sufficient to teach the youthful mind the elements of morality and simple natural religion. But he was a most staunch believer in early moral training, and the power of example exercised by good and spiritually-minded teachers. He began to work the Calcutta College on these auspicious principles, and the institution continued its career for five or six years under varying fortunes, till it had to be broken up for want of support. But Keshub's zeal for the education of youth never abated, and showed itself in various movements till the present Albert College was founded in 1872. Such is a brief survey of the chief events of the five years that preceded the period of Keshub's Ministry in the Brahmo Somaj. He was formally appointed Minister in 1862. During these five years he developed into a lecturer, tract-writer, reformer, missionary, and philanthropist. The activities of his moral and religious nature developed steadily. He became the apostle of every manner of enlightened public spirit, of continued reconstructive social progress. These improvements he added to his foregone attainments of ascetic moral rigour, high piercing intelligence, burning restless enthusiasm. His spiritual character was still in the course of organic formation. The faith, the prayerfulness, the soaring impulses of inspiration, the humilities, the tender penitences were all there, but undeveloped, in a state of volcanic combustion, the fierce flame of which formed a sort of contagious frenzy. All who approached it, young or old, the young specially, were caught in it. A mysterious law of events, an unperceived under-ground force,

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call it as you may, providence, or predestination, fate, or necessity, progress, or evolution, added power to power, gift to gift, in his nature. Devendra Nath Tagore, himself elderly, wise, cautious, much experienced in the vanity of human relations, felt the strange magnetism of the young man's genius. The Brahmo Somaj became the resort of the finest youth of Calcutta, and not a few well-grown elderly men competed with the young for the new standards of excellence so unexpectedly set up. Every important step Keshub took, became a new departure for the whole movement. Every enterprise into which he launched, opened the perspective of a new future. The present doctrine of inspiration or *Adesh* had not then developed. But few could fail to discern that there was a wonderful pre-science and pre-arrangement in what this young man did. Like some immortal, eternal seed, it always fell into fertile ground, it germinated and produced a hundredfold of its kind. It created a widely-felt vitality, opened hidden possibilities, drew men as in a fowler's net, and pervaded the atmosphere. Well does Devendra Nath summarise Keshub's powers. "Whatever he thought in his mind he had the power to express in speech. Whatever he said, he had the power to do. Whatever he did he had the power of making other men do." Thus gradually Keshub's life became the law of progress for the Brahmo Somaj.

What is so deep-seeing as a devout pure-minded human love? It generates profound insight into the latent worth of another's character. It unlocks to one mind the buried potentialities of another. It discovers angels in human form, and turns men into angels. Genius has a twofold function. It originates beauty and truth out of itself; it recognises beauty and truth in others. Keshub Chunder Sen had many friends and admirers among young men. But to whom did it ever occur to invest him with the ministry of the Brahmo Somaj? For Devendra Nath Tagore was reserved the dignity and happiness of making this unexpected announcement. He caused it to be advertised that on the first day of the first month of *Bysak* of the Bengali *Shakabda* 1784, corresponding to the 13th April 1862, Keshub would be formally and publicly installed as *Acharya* (Minister) of the Brahmo Somaj. Such an installation had never been held before, and such a dignity never was conferred. Those who hitherto officiated at the pulpit were called *Upacharyas,* or sub-ministers, while Devendra Nath himself was President of the Brahmo Somaj. This, therefore, was an original occasion, and meant to be celebrated with becoming grandeur.

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To us young men, the announcement was a most pleasurable surprise, to a great many elderly Brahmos it was the cause of bitter and ominous jealousy, to Keshub himself it was a matter of unaffected wonder and deep thankfulness. But by faith and prayer he prepared himself for the position meant to be conferred upon him. The installation was to take place in the family mansion of Babu Devendra Nath Tagore. Great preparations were set on foot. The ceremonies were to be of unique and unprecedented grandeur. The great courtyard was festooned with garlands and lamps, and a classical pavilion with shrubs and flowers was constructed in the middle. A long service was held, at the end of which Keshub was presented with a sort of diploma, framed in gold, in which his main duties as Minister were set forth in beautiful language, the document being signed by Devendra Nath Tagore himself. He was also presented with a brightly emblazoned, velvet-lined casket containing an ivory seal, and the *Brahma Dharma Granth* (Book), these being, as it were, the insignia of his office. The title of *Brahmananda* (Rejoicer in God) was also conferred upon him. Thus was Keshub formally initiated into the duties of the Minister of the Brahmo Somaj, an appointment regarded by him as most sacred and Divinely given, to which he faithfully clung all his life. As Minister, and nothing higher, he always wished to be recognised by the whole Indian Theistic community, taking upon himself spiritual responsibilities, and heavy ceaseless work, the burden of which, to the last day of his eventful life, he bore under every circumstance of trial and difficulty. He looked upon himself as the God-appointed shepherd of the sheep, and his spiritual leading he deeply wanted the whole Brahmo Somaj, then a united Church, to take. He multiplied his functions every year henceforth, till they included the whole sphere of human life. When Devendra Nath installed him as Minister, most probably he did not feel to what a high and important position he raised his young friend, nor perhaps did Keshub himself realise it. But Providence had predestined him to a great work, and every new circumstance of life suggested that work to him in increasing measure. From the time Keshub became Minister of the Somaj, Devendra Nath began to be called the *Pradhan Acharya* or Chief Minister. The festivities and banquets that accompanied the occasion were on the princely style that distinguished all proceedings of the Tagores of Calcutta. The Brahmo public enjoyed them most heartily, but their conclusion was marred by an incident which turned the whole career of Keshub Chunder Sen.

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For some time past, the young Brahmos, who were with Keshub, had been educating their wives, and trying to instil into the minds of the ladies the same views of religion which they themselves possessed. And on this grand occasion of the installation, we determined to invite them to take part in the festivities. Keshub went with some of his friends to his father-in-law's house, in the village of *Bali*, to fetch his wife. He was particularly anxious that she should share in those intimate relations which had been fast growing up between himself and Devendra Nath Tagore. But his guardians strenuously objected to such ideas. In the first place, the ladies of the two families had never been on visiting terms. Then, again, the caste to which Devendra Nath Tagore belonged, though nominally Brahmanical, was practically out of the pale of Hindu communion. Some of his ancestors are said to have lost caste through involuntarily inhaling the smell of certain dishes of animal food cooked by Mahomedan hands under the orders of the Emperor of Delhi. Be that as it may, Keshub's uncle and elder brother did not like, on general grounds, to foster any intimacy between the two families, and especially objected to give any countenance to the occasion which was going to be celebrated, namely, his accession to the Brahmo Somaj Ministry. This was the second conflict through which Keshub had to go. His obduracy and moral courage rose quite equal to the occasion. When he found the elders of the family perfectly determined not to allow his wife to be taken to the house of Devendra Nath Tagore, he drafted a letter to the Inspector of the Colutola police to the following effect:— "Certain parties wish to prevent me by force from taking my wife to a friend's house. I want the help of the police to enable me to exercise my right in this matter." Whether this letter was actually sent or not it is difficult to say, but we distinctly remember to have seen the draft. The police never came, but early in the morning, at about 5 o'clock, on Sunday, the 13th April 1862, the inner courtyard of the large family house of the Sens presented a lively spectacle. All the elder brothers, adult cousins, uncles, and great-uncles who swarmed in the ancestral habitation had left their beds long before sun-rise. Servants and up-country gate-keepers were posted at strategical points, and openings for the enemy's egress, the big outer gates were bolted, barred, locked, and guarded by the stoutest family retainers. Keshub followed by his timid, youthful wife (she could not be more than fifteen at the time) her *sari* hanging in a long veil before her bashful face, came

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out of his own room, and with suppressed excitement walked past the marshalled groups of angry relatives. They had imagined that their presence and hostile demonstration would awe him. But nothing of the sort happened. No word was exchanged, no violence was shown, the shock of his audacity struck them with mute horror; they had never seen, never expected such a thing. But when the brave couple reached the outermost gate, the turbanned ruffians who had been set as guard stood up, and positively refused to let them out. Keshub was not unprepared for this insolence. He simply advanced a step, and with calm dignity commanded them "to withdraw that bolt and unlock the gate." He had that about his face which on great emergencies compelled immediate obedience. The bolt was withdrawn, the gate was unlocked, and with his faithful wife by his side, the young hero stood emancipated in the free light and air of the public street. The big family prison, the arrayed relatives were all left behind, as it happened, for a much longer time than he anticipated at the time. He hired a *palki* at once, and off he went to the hospitable house of Devendra Nath Tagore. But that very evening, scarcely before the grand ceremonies of the installation had terminated, he got a formal missive signed by his uncle and elder brother, forbidding him to re-enter the family house he had disobediently left, and, since he had chosen to outrage the feelings of his guardians, to shift for himself as best as he could. On Keshub's gentle unimpassioned face no emotion of fear or hesitancy showed itself; there was only that calm, inscrutable smile which came, like an unearthly light, on all the great crises of his life. He was silent, and handed over the letter to Devendra Nath Tagore. The generous, fatherly love with which the latter had ever cherished Keshub, the occasion, all planned and created by himself, which brought this calamity on the head of his brave inexperienced young friend, the progress to the cause of the Brahmo Somaj which he foresaw through this act of persecution, altogether fired him with an intense zeal of sympathy, and he invited Keshub most cordially to live in his house as long as he liked. Keshub thankfully accepted the invitation, and found a ready refuge from the results of his courageous defiance of domestic authority. Thus was laid the first stone of woman's education and emancipation in the Brahmo Somaj. Henceforward the wives of Brahmos began to be recognised as a factor in the community, means began to be devised for their higher education, improvement, and welfare. Keshub began to write a few-well-chosen

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precepts under the heading of *Streer prati upadesh* (precepts to the wife). Plans were discussed as to how ladies might be accommodated in the prayer hall of the *Adi Brahmo Somaj*. Altogether the movement seemed to take a new start. As for Keshub himself, this was a most serious crisis of his domestic life. The relations of his public life, and the relations to his wife, were considerably changed, and placed very much on a new footing.

It meant excommunication. His dearest relatives, including even his good noble-minded mother, abjured all connection with him. There was great turmoil in the caste. Our own guardian was summoned before the caste-council at Colutolah, and commanded to expel us from the house, because we, too, had followed Keshub's example by sending our ladies to the Tagore family. But Anand Chunder Mozoomdar, our guardian, refused to obey such a mandate even at the risk of being himself excommunicated. Matters looked as if Keshub would not only be disowned, but disinherited. The young Minister of the Brahmo Somaj entered into his life-work through a domestic ostracism which meant the severance of almost every earthly tie. After his marriage, he says, he "spent his honey-moon amidst asceticism in the house of the Lord." The first honors of his ministry he enjoyed amidst desertion, homelessness, and in deep anxiety of the spirit. Yet Devendra's hospitality sufficed to make him comfortable in every possible way. Young Mrs. Sen had the agreeable and refined companionship of the venerable man's daughters and daughters-in-law. Keshub himself was treated with greater consideration than Devendra's own sons, besides having unrestricted communion with his honored warm-hearted friend. The misfortune of excommunication nearly lost all its sting, and his irate relatives were much discomfited by the discovery that their inhumanity, instead of harming, helped the young offender in maturing his favourite plans, and pursuing his philanthropic activities.

Who, that had a stake in the Brahmo Somaj could ever forget the singular relations of spiritual friendship that had slowly and unconsciously grown up between two men so differently constituted as Keshub Chunder Sen and Devendra Nath Tagore! In Keshub, as Devendra Nath subsequently expressed, he had found "the wealth of seven empires," he had found a genuine man of God, a friend of "undivided spirit."*

*In Devendra's letters to Keshub, the latter was addressed as *Avinna Hridoy* (undivided or one in heart).

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Many men had he seen, he had converted many idolators into theists, but he had never yet met a man whose only delight lay in God. He therefore gave Keshub the surname of *Brahmananda* (Rejoicer in God). Keshub on the other hand found in him an affectionate response, a maturity of faith and love, which he had never met before. He found a father in God. He found a guardian, a friend, an instructor, a patron, and guide. Both in a worldly and spiritual sense, in these days of weary excommunication, he profited by Devendra's love more than he had ever done by any other human being. To the last day of his life, his gratitude and honour for his benefactor were steady. In Devendra's prophetic eye, Keshub centred in himself the whole hope and promise of the future Brahmo Somaj, the ideal spirituality of the rising generation, the gifts and blessings of Providence to the land. Everything he did or said carried a good omen to Devendra's fatherly heart; every feature of his face and mind was a gleam of the Light Eternal to his imaginative trusting soul. Keshub's enthusiasm filled him with the electricity of the higher spheres, Keshub's sympathy intoxicated him, Keshub's intelligence deepened and confirmed his own wisdom, he found a perfect marvel of religious genius in Keshub Chunder Sen. This excessive regard annoyed many, and was looked upon as a sort of idolatry. Till past midnight the two often sat together, the mature man of fifty, and the young enthusiast of twenty-five, and outwatched the whole company of attendant Brahmos. They sat together face to face, absorbed in the ecstacy of transcendent spiritual intercourse, drunk with mutual sympathy and communion. Every wish Keshub expressed about the Brahmo Somaj was sacred to his generous friend, while Keshub carried out, like a dutiful son, every responsibility that was lovingly reposed upon him. How distinctly does the present writer remember the glowing incident wherein Devendra Nath one day indicated Keshub's future. "When *Rajah Dusmwanth* (husband of the discarded *Sakuntala*) had occasion to go up to heaven, he saw, outside the great portals, a little boy playing with a young lion whose teeth he insisted upon forcing open, that he might count them. The *Rajah* thought 'if such be the power of that little fellow when he is a child, what will he become when he grows up to be a man?" *Rajah Dusmwanth* did not recognise that the brave child was his own son, born of the banished *Sakuntala*." "*Brahmananda*," said Devendra Nath, "is but a youth. If such be his power now, what will it be when he fully grows up?" Alas, that when Keshub did grow up to the full height

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of his manhood, Devendra Nath could not be at hand to give him the fond fatherly recognition. Then they had separated, never to unite in this world again!

But exile from home was not the only trial to which Keshub was subjected at this time. A most obstinate and painful scrofulous disease attacked him, and for months together he was bed-ridden. In fact, for the remainder of the year 1862 he suffered continually. The stoical fortitude with which he bore the formidable miseries of this long illness was a fresh source of instruction to every one who approached him to minister and sympathise. A whole army of determined medical tormentors, from the provincial barber, and primeval quack, to the eminent and accomplished Sir Joseph Fayrer,* made him the target of their scientific skill. Lumps of flesh eroded from his person under the action of destructive chemicals, and the lancet travelled in its truculent course from depth to depth. There were about a dozen operations, and Keshub always presented the same spirit of indifference to pain, not allowing even a moan or sigh to escape his lips. One anxious night under the effect of a corrosive, administered by a medical barber (father of one of his favourite pupils), his limbs became cold, his wrists pulseless, and we all hastened to his bedside. We found him feeble, but perfectly composed and fearless. What is worse he had to remove to a little rented house in the midst of this painful illness. The domestic complications which arose, rendered it necessary for him to threaten one of his guardians with legal proceedings, unless the paternal property, to which he was entitled, was restored to him forthwith. It was not considered desirable that he should pursue the processes of this unpleasant duty while under the roof of Devendra Nath Tagore, who might be naturally suspected as the instigator of family ruptures. Nor did it appear proper that in the state of his serious illness he should be entirely cut off from his near relations. It was a delicate position both for Keshub, and his generous friend. But the senior members of the Sen family were still inexorable, they would not receive him in the ancestral house. The difficulty was at last settled by the arrangement that Keshub should remove to lodgings near the family home, where his mother and brothers might visit him, and minister unto his sufferings. Devendra Nath unwillingly consented to this arrangement, but undertook to provide every necessity and comfort that Keshub required in the humble quarters he removed to. The thought-

*Professor of Surgery, Medical College, Calcutta.

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ful and affectionate delicacy with which he did all this, remains unparalleled in the history of Brahmo relations, and though subsequently Keshub had many devoted friends who served him to the best of their power, his obligations to Devendra Nath Tagore put him under a debt that could never be repaid in this life. By December 1862, he recovered from his illness; the financial disputes with his uncle terminated by his having a cheque of Rs. 20,000; he was taken back into the family mansion, his sufferings and fortitude secured the sympathy and admiration of his relatives. His eldest son Karuna Chunder was born, nay it altogether seemed as if the departing year carried away, on its shoulders, all the misfortunes and trials of the heroic young reformer.

Keshub re-entered the family house in triumph. Well does Krishna Behari Sen, the affectionate brother, relate in his short sketch, entitled "Our Minister," that Keshub "triumphed over physical sufferings, and triumphed over persecution." And an opportunity soon presented itself of celebrating his triumph. The son being born on the 19th December, Keshub bethought himself of performing the Brahmo father's first duty, namely, the ceremony of *Jat Karma*, or formal thanksgiving for the birth of a child. And this being Keshub's first-born child, he meant to do it in becoming style. Consultations were held with friends and relatives, but all the latter disapproved of the idea. They said that such a Brahmo ceremony, held in the Hindu household, would greatly offend the feelings of all the members of the family, the majority of whom professed the orthodox faith. But this time Keshub determined to stand upon his rights. He, like the others, was a sharer in the family house, and why should he not act according to his convictions, as the rest of the sharers acted according to theirs? If his relatives would not offer him help; he knew where to seek for it. A bare expression of his wish was enough to persuade Devendra Nath Tagore to order grand preparations to be made for the *Jat Karma ceremony*. A long list of invitations to all Brahmos —there were no party divisions in the Brahmo Somaj at that time—was drawn up, a grand pavilion was set up in the inner courtyard, bands of noisy native musicians were posted in different quarters of the building, and the discomfited orthodox Sens found that everything went on with the most offensive success, in spite of all they could do. On the morning of the 11th January 1863, when the ceremony was appointed to take place, the tom-toms began to beat, and the *sanai* piped with vigour, the *nahabat* gave out its far-reaching strains, the flowers and

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garlands were being hung up in heaps, and the outraged relatives felt it was growing altogether too hot for them. So this time, instead of trying to exile Keshub, they exiled themselves. They entreated the irrepressible bandsmen, to give a moment's truce to their clamorous instruments, for to their heart the unseasonable music was like insult added to injury ; and in the temporary lull, they beat a hasty retreat, clearing out of the house with women, children, servants, bag and baggage all. Only Keshub's mother remained with him. Keshub was thus left in undisputed possession of the whole field, he could do in the house as he chose. The *Jal Karma* festival, the first Brahmo ceremony held by Keshub, was celebrated with great pomp, and established his position in the family house firmly for ever. Nay, it brought over some of his relatives to his side. Henceforward they ventured to show greater sympathy with him, and more openly than before. One after another they were converted to his principles, till at last the whole tone and character of the family became theistic.

Cured from severe illness, recalled from domestic exile, established in the bosom of the family, Keshub devoted his time now to the labours of his Ministry. The Brahmo Somaj speedily waxed powerful, conversions to evangelical Christianity became more and more rare, and Christian propagandists felt it more necessary than ever to check the growing influence of the upstart theistic organisation. So one more the bugle-notes of controversy were sounded. But this time it was not Mr. Dyson, or any European at all, who descended into the battle-field. It was the Rev. Lal Behari Day, a native Christian pastor, one of the first-fruits of Dr. Duff's labours, who challenged Keshub to defend the Brahmo Somaj, if he could, against his determined attacks. The Rev. Lal Behari Day had considerable reputation as an English scholar. But he was even more celebrated for his power of ridicule. In fact, he combined the two qualities together for which he soon found ample field. Mr. Day started the *Indian Reformer,* a weekly journal, conducted with fair ability, which poured floods of ridicule upon everything which the Brahmos did or said, of course directing principal attention upon the two leaders Devendra Nath Tagore, and Keshub Chunder Sen. The success of Mr. Day's buffoonery emboldened him to appear as a public lecturer, and at last his attacks seemed to demand some reply. Keshub gave that reply in his well-known lecture on "The Brahmo Somaj Vindicated" in April 1863. It has been already said that public sympathy lay altogether with the Brahmo Somaj in such discussions, and

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the promising genius and eloquence of Keshub Chunder Sen had invested that sympathy with great expectations for the future. So the announcement of Keshub's lecture drew a vast audience, including the great Dr. Duff himself, who was so impressed with the bulk and behaviour of the crowds of listeners, that with his characteristic frankness he at once said "the Brahmo Somaj was a power in the realm." Keshub, without being in the least disrespectful to the claims and excellencies of Christianity, defended the position of the Brahmo Somaj with an enthusiasm and ability that won the admiration even of his opponents. Successive lectures and counter-lectures followed, and the Brahmo Somaj, at each stage of the controversy, gained in influence, making headway, and acquiring popularity with the rising generation. The orthodox Hindus in general felt thankful that an effective check had at last been given to the progress of Christian conversion on the part of the youthful, and for that reason gradually softened their attitude of hostility to the Brahmo Somaj movement. It may now be asked what was the effect of Keshub's ministry in the Brahmo Somaj? Here he had to meet with another painful trial. The account of the early days of that ministry is not at all cheerful to look back upon. As the Minister, he was not at home in his pulpit, he was not popular in the congregation of the Brahmo Somaj of those times. His batch of youthful followers, all under twenty-five, liked whatever he said. They eagerly participated in his indefinitely enlarging faith, his great progressive convictions, zeal, with plenty of unripe energy and warmth in it. But it must be admitted that even they judged his sermons and prayers in Bengali somewhat hard and laboured, not to be compared one moment with the glowing transcendental sentences that flowed from the mouth of Devendra Nath Tagore, with all the inspiration of the *Himalayas* still ablaze within his heart. Keshub's sermons were mostly ethical and intellectual in those days, with large bursts of fiery enthusiasm, and towering flights of faith. The elder portion of our Wednesday audiences simply tolerated the new Minister with many mental protests, and badly expressed compliments which were taken at their proper value. Devendra Nath's power as president and chief priest was too great for any one to oppose actively the election of his favourite nominee. But the spirited young shepherd felt disturbed by the tendencies of his flock. He could not ignore the fact that he was not exactly able to lead the congregation through services and sermons which he could then produce, that he was out of element in the Bengali

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language, that in devotional affairs he did not represent, and therefore could not satisfy the tastes of the weekly visitants of the place of worship. One firm, unfailing advocate, encourager, and sympathiser he always had ; and that was Devendra Nath Tagore himself. In those days, the weekly sermons used to be printed by the Somaj press in the form of small pamphlets, of about eight pages. One after another as these pages appeared, Devendra Nath Tagore would despatch most enthusiastic little epistles to the young Minister, expressive of sympathy and admiration. Nevertheless, the consciousness of his unpopularity preyed upon the spirits of the young man secretly and deeply. We remember one Wednesday night, after the service, he quietly came to the compound of our house, where the present writer was lying on a *charpoy*, sat beside him, and began to talk of his experiences as a Minister. We clearly remember him to have said that he considered English lectures to be his real sphere of work, that the Brahmo Somaj pulpit was an uncongenial place, that people did not feel edified by his ministrations ; and he even went so far as to hint that he might some day resign the holy office conferred upon him by his most kind and excellent friend, the *Pradhan Acharya*. Altogether, his mood of mind was desponding. To compare the wonderful success of his later ministry with those days of spiritual struggle and unattained popularity, is a strangely instructive study. But in this, as in all things regarding his religious life, Keshub is the example of slow attainment and human growth. There was nothing of the supernatural about him.*

Soon after the commencement of the next year, February 1864, Keshub projected an extensive missionary expedition, unattempted before in the history of the Brahmo Somaj, of making a complete circuit of the Indian peninsula, travelling

*The Venerable Devendrâ Nath Tagore thus relates the impulse which led him to appoint Keshub Minister of the Brahmo Somaj. "I had pitched my tent at a place called *Ghuskarah*, not far from Burdwan, in a mango tope, containing thousands of trees. It was about midday. And there the Voice came to me saying 'Appoint Keshub as the Minister of the Brahmo Somaj. The Somaj shall grow and prosper under him.' I returned to Calcutta and determined to make the appointment. The elderly Brahmos entreated me not to do this. They said 'appoint him *Upacharya*. do not appoint him *Acharya*.' Keshub Babu himself was not prepared for the honor. But the Voice of God had come to me, I had received the Inspiration, and I determined to act accordingly. Such leadings (*chalana*) I have often received in the career of the Brahmo Somaj."

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through the great cities of Bombay and Madras. Before this, Bombay had never received the gospel of the Brahmo Somaj, and Keshub's lectures, one of which was presided over by the late Sir Alexander Grant, produced very great effect. Mr. Kursondas Madhavadas, a Bombay *Bania,* then in the zenith of his prosperity, received the reformer of Calcutta with hospitality in his splendid house at Malabar Hill. Dr. Wilson, the veteran missionary, showed warm sympathy, called friendly meetings at his house, and introduced Keshub to Maharajah Daleep Sing, who then happened to be sojourning in Bombay.† Meetings were held both at the Framji Cowasji Institute, and the Town Hall, and Sir Bartle Frere, then Governor of Bombay, showed Keshub great kindness. By one of the coasting steamers, belonging to the British Indian Company, he sailed to Calicut on the Malabar Coast, having for his companion Annada Charan Chatterjea, then a missionary of the Brahmo Somaj. The reception in Madras, whither he proceeded by rail from Calicut, proved no less enthusiastic. In fact, Keshub was impressed all the more by the simplicity and natural earnestness of the inhabitants of what is called the Benighted Presidency. The *Maharattas,* in their own way, sympathised and expressed their admiration for the young representative of the Brahmo Somaj. When he visited *Poona* they called a regular old-fashioned meeting of the *Peshwa* times in the *Bisrambag* Palace, they put garlands round his neck, and presented him with *atar* and *pan-supari.* But the Madrasis who gathered in immense crowds at *Patcheapa's* Hall, wondered at his eloquence and enthusiasm, and gave him the name of the "Thunderbolt of Bengal." Both the presidencies were awakened to religious thought and activity. The Brahmo Somaj, of which they had already heard from the newspapers, for which they had entertained a vague distant respect, now appealed to their homes and hearts. The response came most naturally. The education they had received, the reformed aspirations they had commenced to feel, the inborn spiritual instincts of their

†Daleep Sing was at this time a strait-laced, Christian bigot. In his reminiscences of Bombay, Keshub, and the friend who accompanied him related how the Sikh prince asked them whether every orthodox Hindu, both ancient and modern, was not "a liar," and would not descend into the nether regions. And then he volunteered the information that his own ancestors were what he believed all Hindus to be, and had long made their way into the hot depths below. Daleep Sing impressed Keshub as a weak-minded voluptuary, who had picked up his religious views from extra-Calvinistic tracts, and truculent missionaries to the heathen. This is interesting in view of what Daleep Sing is now.

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Hindu hearts, all disposed them to accept with cordiality the messages of truth and trust which the fiery apostle of the Brahmo Somaj now brought them. They received him with open arms. The establishment of the Brahmo Somaj in Bombay and Madras only became a question of time. Keshub himself, on the other hand, was deeply struck with the maturity of the times, with the readiness which the educated Hindu population of those distant provinces manifested to accept a common creed, and enter into a common brotherhood. This pioneer expedition of Keshub with the propaganda of the Brahmo Somaj, suggested to his mind the possibility of the formation of a grand Theistic organisation which would include within its operations all the provincial centres of enlightenment, thought, and reformed activity. The idea of a Brahmo Somaj for all India thus arose in his mind for the first time. The warm sympathy he got everywhere, proved beyond doubt his fitness to take the initiatory steps for such a movement. He had felt sure for a long time that his part in the Brahmo Somaj was a leading part, but his reverence for his generous friend the *Pradhan Acharya* was true and deep, and he never wanted to do anything in supercession, or even in disregard of Devendra Nath Tagore's wishes.

In matters of social reform, however, Devendra Nath had ever been a conservative. His confidence in Keshub was always so entire that even in very important matters he willingly sacrificed his own prejudices in preference of Keshub's reforming zeal. Thus, for instance, when the speculations of the *Sangat Sava* about the necessity of renouncing the *Upavita*, or sacred thread, on the part of Brahmin members of the Somaj were published, Devendra Nath threw away this Brahminical badge from his own person. Nay he went further. After installing Keshub as Minister, he appointed two other men as *Upacharyas*, or assistant ministers, who had the exclusive distinction of having renounced their sacred thread. The principle that the Brahmo Somaj had followed from Raja Ram Mohun Roy's time, namely, never to allow any but reputable Brahmins to officiate in the pulpit, was thus surrendered. Even intermarriages had begun to be tolerated according to the ritual of the Brahmo Somaj under the sanction of Devendra Nath. The first marriage between persons of different castes was celebrated in August, 1862. This marriage, the celebration of which was somewhat private, on account of the personal circumstances of one of the contracting parties, opened the door to social innovations that, not long afterwards changed the whole character of the Brahmo Somaj, and caused a disrup-

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tion in its membership. Keshub, to whom the bridegroom was well known, was chiefly instrumental in bringing about the marriage, but Devendra Nath, who made no objection to the observance of Brahmo Somaj rites on the occasion, held aloof. He did not attend the ceremony, and did not take any notice of the proceedings. Evidently he had no liking for such marriages. Keshub was enthusiastic over it, he felt the Somaj was making a great departure in taking this step. He anticipated the important issues which the first inter-marriage involved. But he was most discreet in the expression of his enthusiasm. Keshub, however, had doubts about the legality of such marriages, in fact of all Brahmo Somaj marriages, celebrated according to strict unidolatrous ceremonies, from which essential Hindu rites were omitted. He tried to persuade Devendra Nath to take the opinion of the best known lawyers in Calcutta as to whether the reformed marriage rites had the sanction of Hindu law. Devendra, however, could never reconcile himself to the idea of marrying widows, and far less persons, of different castes. He did not care to obstruct Keshub's reforms, but when such marriages began to multiply in the Bramo Somaj, his feeling was that of secret uneasiness. Keshub could detect the uneasiness, but he had been so far committed to the cause of reform by that time, and his ambition to serve and develop the community had so far advanced, that he could not afford to reconsider the matter, much less stay his course. Now there had always been a third party in the Brahmo Somaj, a party of intelligent elderly men, at one time great favourites of the *Pradhan Acharya,* who were strongly opposed to all the new ideas and measures Kesub had introduced, and bitterly jealous of the ascendancy he had gained. They, being always watchful of their opportunity, noticed the alarms and misgivings of Devendra Nath. When Keshub was away in his distant tour in Bombay and Madras, during his absence another intermarriage had taken place, to which moral objections were taken by these conservative Brahmos, objections which, though not unfounded, were ignored by the younger members. Upon this the former worked very powerfully upon the fears of the noble-hearted Devendra, and succeeded in persuading him to reconsider the relations of the Brahmo Somaj to the whole subject of social reform. On Keshub's return he found matters had taken an unfavourable turn. This was the first evil omen of the serious differences that were soon to rise to cause painful separation among the best of friends, and give rise to the first secession in the Brahmo Somaj. Troubled in

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thought, depressed at the prospect of consequences, Keshub felt that he was likely to be out-numbered at head-quarters on the impending controversies, and began to agitate on the propriety of establishing a *Pratinidhi Sava* (Society of Representatives), to take the opinions of all Brahmo Somajes in the provinces on questions of importance, but he did not succeed in the establishment of such a body before the next year 1865. However, at every such step, his tactics were suspected, and the differences imperceptibly grew wider and wider.

It has already been hinted that naturally Keshub Chunder Sen and Devendra Nath Tagore were differently constructed. Spiritual sympathy had united them together, but their mental characteristics scarcely agreed on any point. Take for example the type of their devotional nature. Devendra's prayers were the overflow of great emotional impulses stirred by intense meditation on the beauties and glories of nature. His utterances were grand, fervid, archaic, profound as the feelings were, which gave them rise. But they seldom recognised the existence of sins and miseries in human nature, or the sinner's necessity for salvation.* Devendra Nath had never received the advantage of a Christian training. His religious genius was essentially *Vedic, Aryan,* national, rapturous. The only element of Semitic mysticism which he ever imbibed was from the ecstatic effusions of the Persian poet *Hafez.* But the characteristic of the Hafezian, or *Sufi* order of piety, is not ethical, or Christian, but sentimental, and so to say Hindu. Devendra's mind assimilated it most naturally. He believed all sinfulness and carnality to be the private concerns of each individual man, which ought to be conquered by resolute moral determination. On the other hand, simple daily prayer had been a habit with Keshub long before he entered the Brahmo Somaj. He prayed fervently, freely, untutored, and undirected. He prayed as his artless soul was led in the paths of spontaneous appeals to a merciful Father for protection against sin and falsehood. Keshub's prayers were not tender, eloquent, or glowing as those of his venerated colleague, but they were *real.* They faithfully represented the temptations, follies, wickednesses, longings, and aspirations of our plain poor humanity. Time and experience have tried the respective merits of the two orders of devotion. The fervour and sweetness of Devendra's spirituality spent themselves on a hard, quarrelsome, unappreciative world, and

*Vide *Faith and Progress of the Brahmo Somaj,* pp. 196, 197.

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drove him in despondency to re-seek the solitary mountains which for a long time have been the home of his old age; whereas Keshub's solid piety grew, expanded, deepened, matured, and namelessly sweetened under the fiery trials through which he went for the next few years. But there was deeper difference still. Devendra was impulsive, very sensitive, conservative, autocratic, and settled in his views. He wanted to establish a model Hindu society, and revive the ancient Hinduism of the *Upanishads* in the Brahmo Somaj. Keshub was calm, self-contained, inured to mental loneliness, but he had not yet formed his ideals. A vast perspective of change, progress, activity was before him. He was every day growing with his cause. The Infinite and the Unknown drew him, and he was determined to go where it led. He wanted to establish a new society, and a new religion. Devendra derived his ancestry from the *Brahmins* of *Kanyakubja,* and had always a constitutional partiality for the sacred caste. The pulpit of the Brahmo Somaj, which was theologically an anti-caste institution, was up to this time uncontaminated by *Sudra* ministry of any kind. The rule was first broken in Keshub's favour. On the contrary, Keshub, though not a *Sudra,* never abounded in traditional reverence for any class, or order. His genius recognised genius and talent as only worthy of honour. He divested not a few of his *Brahmin* companions of their sacred thread. It cannot be denied on such points his ideas were a good deal revolutionary. Devendra Nath, though discarding idolatry, was a strict observer of the proprieties and sacraments of Hindu marriage. Widow marriage was to him a disagreeable thing, and intermarriage still worse. Keshub on the other hand, had to deal with the excommunicated, the youthful, the widowed, the unmarried, the unendowed men and women, seeking resettlement in faith, life, character, in the relationships of home, sympathy, and society. The demands of the new generation fell upon him thick and fast waiting for a ready response. He had imbibed new ideas with his mother's milk. His heart yearned after those men and women, who could not approach the *Pradhan Acharya* in his exalted dignity, but who looked up to *him* as their natural leader, brother and helper. And hence, though himself bred in an aristocratic household, Keshub readily took to the new tendencies, but never made any unnecessary fuss about them. He quietly waited for his opportunity, and when that came, did not hesitate to identify himself with radical reforms of all kinds. *Brahmans* minus their sacred thread, and *Sudras* cured of their reverence for

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Brahmans, ate, mixed, and married together, and the Brahmo Somaj proposed to make short work of the time-honoured traditions of the great Hindu society around. The *Brahmanandi-Dal* (associates of *Brahmananda*) shocked and revolutionised every orthodox prejudice of the staid, slow-going, elderly Brahmos. Thus the varying ambitions and ideas in the minds of the two leaders, united in the bonds of the heavenliest friendship, nevertheless produced their necessary consequence. Youth and ardour, even under the wholesome restraint of the sincerest personal reverence, thirsted after unlimited progress, and social re-embodiments. It must be readily admitted, however, that under the protecting shadow of Devendra's paternal encouragement, Keshub's forward, fertile efforts found abundant scope. But the sagacious young man could not but mark that there were times and subjects on which his revered friend's principles were immovable. He honoured these principles, and said little about them. But for his own part he meant to act and advance in spite of them. On the other hand, to the infinite credit of Devendra Nath be it said, that with all his wisdom, experience, and insight, his generosity yielded an unquestioning confidence to his enthusiastic colleague, and he made greater compromises to Keshub's new methods of action than he had done ever before to any other man. But Devendra felt in the mind of his mind that he could not control his ardent friend. All his broad, self-forgetful, unwordly affectionateness could not avail him, but he now and then felt an unpleasant hitch when brought to deal with the sharp, rugged resolutions of the untamed young enthusiast. Devendra Nath sometimes complained that he could never get to the heart of his beloved colleague, and Keshub in his impenetrable reserve kept his own counsel. This course of mutual forbearance and toleration, which did not diminish, but added picturesqueness and depth to their mutual relations, went on till the end of 1864, very nearly for six years. But the unuttered contrarieties of moral ideals must some day come to an avowed reckoning. Circumstances force unexpected emergencies upon the conscience when the very best friends have to part company, and accomplished conduct sternly, demands a continuity of principle and duty. The divergencies of principles in the two men began to accentuate themselves. Keshub insisted on reforms, Devendra Nath discouraged them. He was mortified, apprehensive, dubious. Keshub inwardly perceived this, and wanted that the affairs of the Somaj should be administered by the public voice on constitutional principles. Devendra had no faith in the public. Elderly and interested

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persons, who had long enjoyed the Brahmo name without deserving it, and hovered, not without motives, around the prosperity of the *Pradhan Acharya,* began to deal in their congenial trade of carrying stories. There was a deep struggle in Devendra's mind between private feeling and public duty. He thought duty demanded he should make a determined stand, and nip these ambitious reforms in the bud. He began by cancelling the arrangement by which Brahmin ministers, wearing the badge of their caste, were no longer admissible to the ministry. He re-admitted them to the pulpit.

It came about thus. In the great cyclone of Oct. 1865, the old building of the *Adi Somaj* at *Jorasanko* was so far damaged that the weekly Divine service had to be removed thence to the dwelling-house of Devendra Nath Tagore. While there, one Wednesday in November, it was so arranged that before the newly-elected *Upacharyas* (assistant ministers, who had renounced their Brahminical thread) arrived, the two former *Upacharyas,* who had been deposed for *retaining their sacred thread* by the authority of Devendra Nath himself, were installed into the pulpit again. In order that this might be done without hindrance, the devotional proceedings were begun a few minutes earlier than the appointed time. When on arrival at the place of worship Keshub and his friends witnessed this irregularity, they left the service, and warmly protested. Devendra Nath replied that as the service was being held in his private house, he had the right to make what arrangement he liked. But Keshub's party insisted that it was the public worship of the Brahmo Somaj, only transferred for a little interval to his house by the consent of the congregation, and if he chose to violate the rules of the ministry laid down under his own presidency, they must decline to join such services in future. Thus began the act of secession from the parent Somaj at *Jorasanko*. From a seeming insufficiency of occasion, but from sheer psychological necessity, the first great rupture of Brahmo relations took place. Alas, how many secessions, schisms, and ruptures were involved in this first separation! If Keshub had anticipated all these troubles would he have separated? Ought he not to have tried to find some means of keeping up a semblance of communion with the original body, though he should have created for himself an independent field of activity? He did try, he must have felt some foreshadowing fear of the effects of the separation. He proposed a separate day of public worship in the Somaj building, apart from the usual Wednesday service, for himself and his friends. He repeatedly endeavoured to arrange united

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festivals during the anniversary. But to no purpose. Devendra had finally made up his mind, and was inexorable. He feared that any continuance of relations with these young firebrands would lead to endless troubles in future. The secession alone could solve the difficulty. Retiring with his friends from the *Adi*, then called the Calcutta Brahmo Somaj, Keshub never suffered for a day his reverence and affection for *Pradhan Acharya* Devendra Nath Tagore to abate. The official and private correspondence he conducted was firm, sometimes strongly worded, but his personal attitude to his venerable friend was submissive in the extreme. Before the formal parting he presented to the latter an eloquent and feeling address, acknowledging his invaluable services to the cause of the Brahmo Somaj, and the spiritual help derived from his ministrations by every member of the Theistic Church.*Be it said also

*The following is a translation of the parting address presented by Keshub to the *Pradhan Acharya* :—

To the Venerable *Maharshi* Devendra Nath Tagore, *Pradhan Acharya* of the Calcutta Brahmo Somaj.

FATHER,

When the patriotic, virtuous, great-souled Raja Ram Mohun Roy established a public place for the holy worship of God in Bengal, the true welfare of the country began. Roused from the sleep of ignorance for ages Bengal received a new life, and, freed from superstitions, began to walk independently in the path of progress. But that great man being within a short time removed from this world, the light of Divine worship kindled by him came very nearly to be extinct. At this crisis God raised you, and placed in your hands the charge of the spiritual advancement of the country. The unselfish and untiring zeal with which you have borne this responsibility for the last thirty years, and the endless good you have done, binds us to you in the debt of everlasting gratitude. To revive the declining worship of God according to *Vedantic* principles, as practised before, you founded the society known as the *Tatwabodhini Sava* in *Shakabda* 1761 (1839 A.D.), where many educated young men forsook their prejudices through religious discussions, and were able to purify their hearts by the worship of God. This society made rapid progress, and within a short time was filled by a numerous membership. In order that the results of your religious investigations might spread still more widely you founded in *Shaka* 1765 (1843) the celebrated *Tatwabodhini Patrika*. This journal has truly reformed and adorned the Bengali language, and disseminated the truths of spiritual and secular learning in various places of Bengal and the N.-W. Provinces. Thus the *Tatwabodhini Sava*, and the Brahmo Somaj founded by Raja Ram Mohun Roy, helping each other, contributed to the increase of the worshippers of God. In order to unite them in the bonds of a common faith in due time, you introduced the form of initiation in *Brahma Dharma* in 1843. By this means you established the worshippers on the ground of formal belief, and organised them into a sect of *Vedantic* Theism. Thus the Brahmo Somaj, developed into its full shape, began to grow, and branch Somajes were founded in different places. But

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that Devendra Nath Tagore never lost his interest in his young friends, and never ceased to be anxious about their spiritual progress. One unhappy suspicion, however, took very deep root in Devendra's mind. This was that Keshub in all his reforms and activities was stimulated by a towering ambition for personal notoriety, and not so much by a desire to advance the cause of true religion in the land. The prediction was freely made that the social revolutions, so recklessly begun, would, in the end, undermine all piety and devotion. They would end in Keshub's movement being regarded as a clique of denationalised radicals, who were disowned by the whole Hindu community. Keshub and his friends retorted by saying that the *Adi Somaj* would surely be looked upon as a useless survival of the past,

in the advancement of true religion, errors cannot last for a long time. Therefore the dangerous doctrine of the infallibility of the *Vedas* that underlay these developments, as soon as it was exposed in the light of knowledge, you tried to discard in obedience to conscience, by the commandment of God, and for the good of the Brahmo brotherhood. By churning the ocean of the Hindu *shastras* you had obtained the nectar of truth, but when afterwards you found poison in that nectar, you set yourself to distinguish the two, and at last published under the name of *Brahma Dharma* a compilation of the truths of the Hindu scriptures in 1850. In consequence the form of initiation in the Brahmo Somaj was also modified. By deep contemplation you elaborated a number of fundamental and indisputable principles of Theism, and upon these you established the Brahmo community. Thus organising the Brahmo Somaj, for a few years you retired to the Himalayan mountains. Stopping there for two years, your mind and heart were elevated by contemplation, prayer, study, and you returned to Calcutta to devote yourself with redoubled zeal to the progress of the Somaj which you had reformed before. You established the Brahmo School, where week after week you dispensed the pure saving knowledge of Theism to convert unto God the hearts of young men, and your precepts collected in the form of a book still help hundreds to understand the faith and doctrines of the Brahmo Somaj. But even then the true nobleness of your soul was not discovered. When as *Pradhan Acharya* of the Calcutta Brahmo Somaj you began to discourse from the holy pulpit on the glorious truths of *Brahmo Dharma*, then indeed your deep and lofty sentiments became fully known to the world, and specially drew the hearts of men towards God. How often amidst the sins and sorrows of the world we were refreshed by the sweet streams of wisdom that flowed from your heart; how often in the Brahmo Somaj your rousing precepts have revived our dull dead spirits, and in the realms of the spirit, you discovered for us, we were cheered by the beauty and profoundness of truth, for the time forgetting the world. These heavenly and matchless *Bakhyans* (sermons) have now been published in book-form. The benefit we derived from hearing them, we believe, others also will derive who read them, and that this invaluable book will be duly honoured in different lands. Thus have you generally served the Brahmo community after the ideals of your own heart, but you have

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a body without soul, a mere historical landmark, dividing the dead from the living organisation of Divine Theism. Keshub, however, took Devendra's warning prediction to heart, and secretly resolved, while he carried on the reforms he had initiated, never to permit his movement to drift into revolutionary social experiments. Devendra Nath on the other hand resolved, now that he had winnowed away the semi-Europeanised young innovators, to exalt the Brahmo Somaj into its pristine Aryan purity. He wanted to re-establish it as the model Hindu Church of the future, which the nation, as it outgrew its idolatrous surroundings, would learn to regard as the store-house of everything great and holy in the past, everything hopeful and promising in the future. The two parties, however, younger and elder, while they parted, parted, in spite of fierce passages at arms, not without sincere mutual respect, and unfeigned sorrow.

specially benefited a few among us whom you have treated as affectionately as your own children. These have felt the deep nobleness of your character, and elevated by your precept, example, and holy companionship, reverence you as their father, and regard you as their true friend and help in the path of spiritual progress. They will for all time be bound to you by the debt of gratitude. That the religion of the Brahmo Somaj is the religion of love, and that it is above mere abstract rationalism and empty reform, we have learnt from you, and by your influence and teaching perceived the spiritual holiness and joy of Brahmoism.

Benefited extremely in these various ways, we present you to-day this address as the tribute of the reverence and gratitude of our hearts. It is not our object to speak vain words of praise. Only stimulated by the sense of duty and heartfelt thankfulness we venture to take this step. Do us the great favour to accept this unworthy testimony. May the great God dispense unalloyed joy to your heart, may all your holy intentions be fulfilled, and may every prosperity attend you in this life, as well as in the next.

Calcutta, Nov. 1866.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN AND OTHERS.

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CHAPTER VI.

DEVOTIONAL AND MISSIONARY EXCITEMENT.

Beginning of Independent Career, 1866 to 1870.

Keshub signalised the commencement of an independent career, thus thrust upon him by circumstances, in the establishment of the Brahmo Somaj of India, on the 11th November 1866. The separation had taken place nearly a twelve-month before, but all this time was spent in making protests and representations to secure public sympathy, as well as in diverse negotiations with a view to some settlement of differences. But these negotiations came to nothing. Keshub spoke to a crowded audience on the "Struggles for Independence and Progress in the Brahmo Somaj," and held various meetings. He had the *Indian Mirror* newspaper in his hands now, the possession of which he secured after much difficulty. He issued a vernacular journal called the *Dharma Talwa,* in opposition to the *Tatwabodhini,* which was Devendra's organ. How were the two parties balanced? The *Pradhan Acharya* had a number of elderly adherents, and his accomplished sons, some of whom were of the same age as Keshub, helped his cause energetically. But there is no doubt that Keshub's enthusiasm and genius drew all the youth and intelligence of the community, and his important reforms attracted the sympathy of influential outsiders. The Brahmo community up to then was a disorganised mass, and Keshub's first effort was to bind it together into a body of believers, to give them a constitution by which they might control their affairs, elect their office-bearers, raise and disburse their funds. It was also his object to take effective measures to propagate the principles of his religion. So the introductory speech which Keshub made at the meeting on the 11th November, when the new Brahmo Somaj was founded, ran thus:—"We have met here to discharge a most important duty, which we owe to ourselves, to our Church, and to India. Our present object is simply to organise and incorporate the Brahmo community, to establish such enduring bonds of sympathy and union among the several members of our community as are essential to their individual and common welfare, to the consolidation and growth

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of our Church, and to the effectual propagation of *Brahmo Dharma* (Theism). For this purpose God has gathered us together this evening. May He enable us to achieve it. We see around us a large number of Brahmo Somajes in different parts of the country for the congregational worship of the One True God, and hundreds upon hundreds of men professing the Brahmo faith ; we have besides missionaries going about in all directions to preach the saving truths of *Brahmo Dharma* ; books and tracts inculcating these truths are also being published from time to time. To unite all such Brahmos and form them into a body, to reduce their individual and collective labours into a vast but well organised system of unity and co-operation—this is all that is sought to be accomplished at the present meeting. Professing a common faith, it is our duty to combine for the common good, and not to remain isolated and be regardless of each other. We must endeavour to realise, so far as lies in our power, the True Ideal of the Church of God, we must form a truly Theistic Brotherhood, a Family of God's children of which He is our common Father and Head, that holy Kingdom of Heaven of which He is the Eternal King." The resolution adopted at the meeting, and drafted by Keshub was this :—"Whereas the trustees of the Calcutta Brahmo Somaj have taken over to themselves the charge of the whole property of the said Somaj, and the connections of the public with the said property have ceased and whereas the money subscribed by the public should be spent with the consent of the public, it is resolved at this meeting that the subscribers or members of the Brahmo Somaj be formally organised into a Society, and that subscriptions be spent in accordance to their wishes for the propagation of Brahmoism." This was the Brahmo Somaj of India. We wanted naturally to make Keshub the head of the Society so formed. But he declined : he caused it to be declared in a resolution that the Brahmo Somaj of India had no human head, "God alone was its Head." Keshub modestly undertook to be its Secretary. He made its membership include every race, community, all men and women whoever might wish to join it. Selections from all the scriptures of all nations of the world were compiled to form its text-book of devotional lessons, and for the first time extracts from the Bible, *Koran, Zendavesta,* and the Hindu *Shastras* stood side by side as the scriptures of the Brahmo Somaj. Men from all parts of the country became its members, men whom Keshub in his extensive travels had known to be enthusiastic Theists in Bombay, Madras, and the Punjab. Our motto in Sanskrit composed by Pandit Gour

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Govind Roy was this*:—"The wide universe is the temple of God; Wisdom is the pure land of pilgrimage; Truth is the everlasting scripture; Faith is the root of all religion; Love is the true spiritual culture; the Destruction of Selfishness is the true asceticism: So declare the Brahmos." Thus Keshub laid the foundation of a Universal Church, the principles and operations of which were enlarged and worked with a vigour that promised a great future. The venerable Devendra Nath could not but anticipate the success of such a movement, before which, he felt, his own Somaj would look very much diminished. He, therefore, wished the latter, however reduced in proportions, should retain its character as the original parent organisation of Raja Ram Mohun Roy, and with that view changed its name from the Calcutta Brahmo Somaj into the *Adi Brahmo Somaj*. But if Keshub Chunder Sen founded a Universal Church, it was his object also to establish an apostolic body who would be its elders and teachers. With this object he started the mission department of the Brahmo Somaj of India. We have already said that from the beginning Keshub had a band of devoted followers of about his own age. These men were now formed into a body of missionaries. They were the members of the old *Sangat Sava*, they were the students of the Brahmo school, and they were destined to be in future the Apostles of the New Dispensation.†

Thus the Brahmo Somaj of India began its career as an Apostolical as well as a Universal Church. Every one of its missionaries, under Keshub's example, took the vow of poverty, in his heart. They did not count in those days, including Keshub himself, more than seven or eight men. Now they are three times that number, but the spirit of enthusiastic self-sacrifice they then showed has not been surpassed at any time. Every one resigned his place and prospects of life, offered his life-long services to the Church, and willingly threw himself into the midst of all manner of privations. They daily took out a few pieces of copper from the leader's writing box to buy their necessaries, and that box never contained much, they spent the

*"সুবিশালমিদং বিশ্বং পবিত্রং ব্রহ্মমন্দিরম্।
চেতঃ সুনির্ম্মলস্তীর্থং সত্যং শাস্ত্রমনশ্বরম্॥
বিশ্বাসো ধর্ম্মমূলং হি প্রীতিঃ পরমসাধনম্।
স্বার্থনাশস্তু বৈরাগ্যং ব্রাহ্মৈরেবং প্রকীর্ত্ত্যতে॥"
ধর্ম্মতত্ত্ব।

†*Vide* "We, the Apostles of Brahmo Somaj" (Lectures in India).

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day in prayer, study, contemplation, religious conversation, and other occupations worthy of their calling. One of them had a dangerous chest-disease, and he had no warm clothing of any kind. They had to feed and clothe themselves insufficiently. The Brahmo Somaj of India had no funds in those days. But its missionaries, who were its servants and directors, were only the more enthusiastic the more they sacrificed themselves. Their own lives supplied them with the gospel of practical religion. They first lived and then preached the doctrine of "Think not for the morrow." Their asceticism grew in them before they knew how to name it. They came never expecting any salary, never taking any remuneration, they resigned their all to their Church. Their calling and their self-sacrifice made their faith intense, gave fervor to their devotions, moulded their characters, defined their relationships. Their devotions and mutual relations formed their views and shaped their ideas. The spirit of Providence created in them, and through them the future character of the Church of the New Dispensation. They travelled from place to place with a fierce and all-suffering zeal. Wherever they went Somajes started into being, enthusiasm was kindled, and reforms germinated. Through their agency the Brahmo Somaj entered into an untired field of religious life. The cause began to make unforeseen and unexpected progress. Years have gradually added to the numerical strength and practical importance of this missionary organisation. But the Brahmo Somaj in the New Dispensation still retains its old missionary character of apostolic purity. Keshub Chunder Sen could never have accomplished much without the moral support of such men. It is indeed true that he educated them: but they also educated him by indirect influences. He never concealed the fact that they were his superiors in certain virtues, whereas they looked upon him as the incarnation of everything good.

Thus started and progressed Keshub's new movement. But in the midst of all its activity he could not but feel now and then forsaken and hard-pressed. Who was there, alas, among his youthful companions that could take Devendra Nath's place in his heart, or comprehend his trials, or comfort him in his anxieties and sorrows? He retired to an ancestral garden in the suburbs, lived alone, thinking and writing a great deal. Suddenly in the beginning of the very hot month of May, 1866, he announced a lecture, somewhat sensationally worded, on "Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia."* The Calcutta Medical

Vide Lectures in India.

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College Theatre was engaged for the occasion, and was crowded from floor to ceiling, there being a good number of Englishmen present, and some Christian Missionaries also came with their wives. "Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia" laid the first stone of the collossal reputation which Keshub Chunder Sen soon achieved as an orator and teacher of original religion. This was the first time he made any public utterance on his estimate of the life and teachings of Christ, and not a few Christian Missionaries entertained high hopes of his speedy conversion to Christianity. He began by extolling Christ as a great man and a reformer. "Christ's influence," said he, "but a small rivulet at first, increased in depth and breadth as it rolled along, and swept away in its irresistible tide the impregnable strongholds of error and superstition, and the accumulated corruptions of centuries." He described Christ's mission thus:—"Sent by Providence to reform and regenerate mankind, he received from Providence power and wisdom for that great work." He set forth on the one hand in glowing sentences the moral greatness of Christ as well as "his tenderness and humility, lamb-like meekness and sympathy, his heart full of mercy and forgiving kindness," and spoke on the other hand of "his firm, resolute, unyielding adherence to truth," and then exclaimed in a breathless climax, "Verily, Jesus was above ordinary humanity!" Well meaning Christian friends were on the tiptoe of expectation, and concluded that the Brahmo Somaj was not far from the kingdom of heaven. But few men at the time took sufficient heed to follow the line of sentiment which the Brahmo teacher struck out for himself, while expatiating on the more than human excellences of the character and precepts of Jesus. Upon that line he worked systematically, with results that very much surprised his admirers. "Was not Jesus," he asked, "an Asiatic? I rejoice, yea, I am proud—that I am an Asiatic. In fact, Christianity was founded and developed by Asiatics in Asia. When I reflect on this, my love for Jesus becomes a hundredfold intensified. I feel him nearer my heart, and deeper in my national sympathies. Shall I not rather say he is more akin and congenial to my Oriental nature, more agreeable to my Oriental habits of thought and feeling? . . . . In Christ, we see not only the exaltedness of humanity, but also the grandeur of which Asiatic nature is suceptible. The more this fact is pondered, the less I hope will be the antipathy and hatred of European Christians against Oriental nationalities, and the greater the interest of the Asiatics in the teachings of Christ." Few of the time could divine that Keshub meant to elaborate

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an original view of Christ and Christianity from this unostentatious beginning. Every one was surprised, and great numbers were instructed by the light of genius and eloquence with which he held forth on the moral and spiritual greatness of the Prophet of Nazareth. He conquered at the very first attack men's prejudices against the religion of Christ. But the conquest was not without its disagreeable after-effects. Rumours were set afloat, and significant comments were exchanged on Keshub's growing tendency towards evangelical Christianity. The wiseacres of the *Adi Somaj* congratulated themselves upon their policy of weeding out from their movement this insidious and incipient element of Christian heresy. It was broadly hinted that Keshub being now driven away from his own Church was eager to seek shelter in the fold of the Christian Missionaries. Keshub very keenly felt the edge of this ill-natured criticism. But if some were repelled, others were much attracted by what he said. The present writer was so agreeably struck with the high enthusiasm, and deep appreciation Keshub displayed towards Jesus Christ, as the Messiah, that himself, having somewhat far gone in personal relationship towards that glorious being, he demanded to know Keshub's whole mind on the subject. The following significant reply was sent:—

Maniktolla, 18th May, 1866.

My Dear Protap,—I am sorry I cannot send you the book so soon, as I wish to see the first chapter reproduced in the *Dharmatatwa.* Nor can I at present comply with your request to come and see you at *Garifa,* this is not the time for a pleasure trip like that; besides I am born not to enjoy but to endure. As regards my recent lecture, you ought to remember that I was never ambitious of making Jesus Christ the subject of a learned literary essay or theological discourse. Unless I can *live* Jesus to some extent at least, I cannot *talk* Jesus. Nor could I undertake to preach Jesus to my countrymen till I am fully persuaded that the time has come for such preaching. In other words I must be fit, and the age must be fit, before I can wield the sword which that inspired Prophet brought with him into the work. Of course, I have my own ideas about Christ, but I am not bound to give them out in due form, until altered circumstances of the country gradually develop them out of my mind. Jesus is identical with self-sacrifice, and as he lived and preached in the fulness of time, so must he be in turn preached in the fulness of time. The more is sacrifice needed in India, and the more it is made, the more will Jesus find a home in this land.

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I am, therefore, patiently waiting that I may grow with the age and the nation, and the spirit of Christ's sacrifice may grow therewith.

"Yours Aff'ly.,
K. C. SEN."

The book which, in the beginning of the letter, he says he could not part with, the first chapter of which he wanted to reproduce, was *Ecce Homo,* by Professor Seely, then recently come out from England, and lent to him by Dr. George Smith, then Editor of the *Friend of India.* He read the book, and was its enthusiastic admirer. There is no doubt it greatly helped to make up his estimate of the moral value of Christ's teachings. *Ecce Homo's* suggestions did incalculable good to Keshub and his friends. For a long time we discussed the book with interest, and conspicuous benefit. But in the course of time Keshub ceased to speak of *Ecce Homo,* and drew his further views of Christ from Oriental ideals, which his own genius and spiritual experience portrayed to him. The misunderstandings and evil reports caused by the lecture were painful enough, but they were not without their advantage. They drew upon him the attention of great officials, chief among whom was Lord Lawrence, then Governor-General of India. Lord Lawrence was on the hills at the time, but he was so much pleased with the lecture, a copy of which had been sent him by the late lamented Mr. Norman, a Judge of the High Court, that the Viceroy's Private Secretary wrote him a letter intimating His Excellency's wish to make the lecturer's acquaintance when the Government returned to the plains in the cold weather. This was the origin of that friendship between Lord Lawrence and Keshub Chunder Sen, the results of which, beneficial as they were to the latter personally, were still more beneficial to the Brahmo Somaj. The widespread misrepresentations, however, that found currency about Keshub's views and tendencies after the lecture on Jesus Christ, made it necessary for him to explain his real position to the public. Hence five months later he had to deliver his well-known discourse on "Great Men"* in the Town Hall of Calcutta on 28th September, 1866. This was the first time he appeared in our chief metropolitan building, afterwards the scene of his annual orations, heard by so many thousands. The great sensation caused by his first lecture, and the important

**Vide* Lectures in India.

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consequences to the Brahmo Somaj which it seemed to involve, amply justified him in securing the most public place he could find. The hall was well-filled by an attentive and applauding audience. In the lecture on Great Men, Keshub elucidated the philosophy of his previous utterances, and gave a forecast of his future developments. It contained the substratum of his doctrine of Prophets, the germ of his ideas of Trinity, and the essence of his views on Providence and Inspiration. He described the revelation of God to man to be threefold. First in order is the revelation of God in Nature. "Behold the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the Universe immanent in matter." "There is another revelation; there is God in History. He Who created and upholds this vast universe, also governs the destinies and affairs of nations." The third revelation is God in the Soul. "The highest revelation is inspiration where Spirit communes with spirit, face to face, without any mediation whatever." He largely expatiated on the second form of revelation, and explained the doctrine of Incarnation thus: "True incarnation is not, as popular theology defines it, the absolute perfection of the Divine nature embodied in mortal form; it is not the God of the universe putting on a human body, the Infinite becoming finite in space and time, in intelligence and power. It simply means God manifest in humanity; —not God made man, but God in man," "Great Men," he said, "are above ordinary humanity. It is true they are men; but who will deny they are above ordinary humanity? Though human, they are Divine. This is the striking peculiarity of all Great Men. In them we see a strange and mysterious combination of the human and Divine nature, of the earthly and the heavenly. It is easy to distinguish a great man, but it is difficult to comprehend him."

This well-meant explanation, however, instead of clearing his position, only made it more obscure. For men did not interpret him through his own teachings, but through the prejudices they had already formed of his tendencies. His Christian missionary friends discovered that their hopes of his "conversion" were built upon sand, and soon loudly charged him with having recanted. They expressed the suspicion that his views on Jesus Christ, having caused him unpopularity, he explained them away by assigning to other great men the same position which he had previously assigned to Jesus alone. Keshub's friends in England defended him, but he himself did not try to give any more explanations. Nay, he conceived a strong dislike of explanations and apologies in future.

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He perhaps felt that the time of teaching about Jesus, and other prophets had not yet come. So, for thirteen years, he held his peace. The only exception to his public silence on this subject was what he said in England, but in the meanwhile a rapid development of faith and principles on the subject of Christ and Christianity was taking place in his mind.

Towards the end of the same year (1866) Keshub made a memorable tour through the provinces of East Bengal, visiting Faridpur, Dacca, and Mymensing. The population of this part of the country, always most teachable and susceptible, was thrown into a state of great agitation by his missionary labours. Being accompanied by the two enthusiastic and saintly men, Bejoy Krishna Goswami* and Aghor Nath Gupta*, Keshub at this time laid the foundation of that Eastern Brahmo Church which has borne such abundant spiritual harvests. Banga Chandra Roy*, the Local Minister of East Bengal, and his followers, who receive the respect of all parties in the Brahmo Somaj, were the fruits of those early labours. The orthodox Hindus were so greatly alarmed at these successful activities that in self-defence they founded the *Hindu Dharma Rakhshini Sava* (Society for the preservation of the Hindu religion). This Society for a while systematically persecuted the youthful Brahmos, but it had to succumb at last to the tendencies of the times, all of which favoured the formation of Theistic organisations. In fact the pervading and many-sided vitality of the Brahmo Somaj has since that time, by the mere power of social friction, infused a spasmodic life into the inert mass of idolatrous society, which has sprung up into various short-lived organisations like *Hari Savas, Dharma Savas,* and *Arya Savas,* which are more or less faithful copies of the Brahmo Somaj. These growths, collateral and transitory, are only an independent evidence how the leaven of Brahmo spirituality has caused a fermentation wherever it has mixed with the minds of men. They have tried to counteract the Brahmo Somaj by borrowing its spirit, nay its very forms. Every one of these societies has a close, though specious, resemblance to the liturgy and rituals of the Brahmo Church.

In this expedition to East Bengal, Keshub's nature, after his great lectures, and in the midst of his trials, was fired with mystic faith and devouring enthusiasm. He had to suffer great privations. There was no cook to prepare any food for him, and no orthodox Hindu would give him a meal. So a miser-

*Brahmo Missionaries.

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able preparation of rice and *dal* had to be procured for him from the *adda* or lodgings of low-class *Vaishnavas*. He had no proper bed, and no fixed residence. These sufferings which did not cause the least abatement of his zeal and energy, shook his health. He had fearful attacks of fever, and a kind of brain-disease (vertigo) accompanied with great pain, which never completely left him at any time. In the midst of these drawbacks, while travelling in the inconvenient slow country-boat, he composed his tract on True Faith, one of the master-pieces he ever wrote. Keshub had always been a man of faith. But this little treatise proves the frenzy to which this faith had risen even at that early age. Every one ought to read True Faith to get a real insight into Keshub's religious constitution. "Faith," he defines, "is direct vision ; it beholdeth God and it beholdeth immortality. It relieth upon no evidence but the eye-sight ; and will have no mediation. It neither borroweth an idea of God from metaphysics, nor a narrative of God from history. The God of faith is the sublime I AM. In time He is always *now*, in space always *here*. * * Faith holds a living and loving communion with Him Who is dearer than life. It establisheth a personal relation. * * The vividness of perception is equal to the warmth of the heart, for in faith, knowledge and love, belief and trust are one." He gradually works out the relations of Faith to Immortality, to the moral law, to moral power, to self-renunciation, to joy, to personal sacrifice, to humility, to wisdom, to perpetual progress heavenward, to singularity and originality, to persecution, to deification, to resurrection. In each of these relations he sets down pithy nervous utterances involving great principles which shaped his subsequent life. Here for the first time he enunciated prudence as "the arithmetic of fools," and said "faith taketh no thought for the morrow's bread, and deemeth it scepticism to lay up provisions for the future. For faith liveth in resignation, and hath absolute trust in Providence." Thus the doctrines of asceticism for which men reviled him in 1876 were laid down in 1866.* No one then raised a murmur of complaint, everybody admired and obeyed him. Doctrines when stated excite no hostility, they stimulate men's imagination to curiosity ; when acted out they call forth bitter opposition, because then by the contrast of life they shock men's self-complacence. This little tract on True Faith was written

*He consecrated a small garden house at Konnagore on the river Hoogly and named it *'Sadhan Kanan'* where he practised *Vairagya* (asceticism) along with his brother apostles.

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"as a guide to Brahmo missionaries," and Miss Collet, afterwards the implacable enemy of Keshub's new ideals, remarks that "it resembles the mediæval mystics in its beatific vision of God, and in the sharp contrast drawn between the life of faith, and the life of the world—a contrast not always drawn quite justly to the latter." How very little prepared Miss Collet was for the development of this mysticism, and for the practical realisation of "the contrast between the life of faith and the life of the world!" But Keshub's singularity was that he never laid down anything in doctrine which he did not practically attempt to carry out in his own life, and that of his Church.

The perplexities and trials, consequent on the separation with the parent Somaj, influenced Keshub's genius in two very important directions, one of which was his relationship to Christ and Christianity. His lecture on Jesus Christ was sufficient evidence of this. But the other was even more important. It was the unfolding of Keshub's devotional character. Allusion has been already made to the fact that Keshub Chunder Sen entered religious life with an insufficient quantity of religious feeling. Contrasted with the mystic fervour of his piety during the latter years of his life, this fact becomes not only noteworthy, but truly singular. He entered life, he said with plenty of "faith and enthusiasm, conscience and asceticism," but he had not much joy or love in God. In the 7th chapter of *Jeevan Veda* he says: "There was no hope in me (in those days) of the waters of peace and love of God. I did not know I should ever have a look of the Mother's face. The sands were flying about in the desert, how long should it be thus? I felt this was not right. Many days have I spent thus, I could not go on in this state any longer. Then there was a change. I understood that a man might acquire what he did not possess before. Now there is so much love of God in me that I cannot sufficiently express it. I cannot say whether now there is more of devotion, or of conscience, more of joy, or of discipline."* It might be safely said that till the year 1867, till he had fully felt the desolateness of his position, he was not a devotee in any sense. It has been already pointed out how this deficiency of emotion was in the early years of his ministry a cause of anxiety to Keshub himself, and a cause of unpopularity with others. His nature, however, took a sudden and strange turn about the beginning of 1867. The rupture of friendly relations with Devendra Nath Tagore, the

*Vide *Faith and Progress of the Brahmo Somaj*, pp. 214, 215.

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unpopularity following upon the lecture on Jesus Christ, and Great Men, the absence of worldly resources, and even of a place of worship, the vascillations, and serious differences among his own companions, joined perhaps to his strong vivid sense of sin and short-coming, created quite a mental crisis for Keshub. He had no human counsellor, no earthly guide. His sorrow in imperceptible degrees flowed into the depths of Divine sympathy. It deepened the tones of his piety, gave a reality to his dependence, a pathos to his prayers, a tenderness to his trust, very unusual indeed in his case. About this time he began to hold daily Divine services in his house with a view to find spiritual comfort in his trials, as well as to create more internal sympathy among himself and his friends. These services by a speedy and unforeseen process, acquired profound sweetness, and the emotions of his powerful nature were stirred to the bottom. With Keshub this was a new experience, with us all it was a new delightful surprise. He had an abundance of moral austerity, and acute intelligence, no one could excel him in fiery enthusiasm. But hitherto he had been a stranger to this extreme tenderness of devotional sentiment, and when it came in the course of time and circumstance, he hailed this ecstacy of a new life with all the characteristic ardor of his nature. One thing, in itself a singular fact, and difficult to account for, added to the intensity of his fervour. The spirit of the *Vaishnava* religion entered into Brahmo devotions at this time. *Vaishnava* hymns, commonly called *Sankirtan*, adapted to *Vaishnava* tune and sentiment, were introduced, *Vaishnava* instruments of music, namely the *khole*, the *karatal*, and the *ektara* were also brought into requisition.* By some unexplained impulse in his motives, Keshub selected these eccentric mediums of popular religion. *Vaishnava* music and musical instruments are seldom made use of in the higher circles of Bengali society. The lower and ruder classes of the people, mendicants, wandering devotees, and poor unrefined religionists take to them. Keshub to our positive knowledge, used to hate these things in his youth. But now some force within compelled him to have recourse to these discarded paraphernalia of a rude order of faith. This new kind of musical celebration began to be known by the name of *Brahma*

*The *khole* is a long earthen drum, the sound of which is adapted to the *Vaishnava* order of hymns, and adds to music enthuiasm; the *karatal* is a pair of large brazen cymbals, exceedingly clamorous; and the *ektara* is a harp of one string, which accompanies the voice with monotone.

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Sankirtan. A new epoch dawned upon the Brahmo Somaj with the introduction of this *Brahma Sankirtan*. It meant the opening up of a new world of religious feeling, it laid the foundation of a new spiritual relationship with the most popular of the recent prophets of India, the apostle of *Bhakti*, namely, *Chaitanya*.

Thus Keshub stood at the threshold of his independent career with the shadow of Jesus on the one hand, and the shadow of Chaitanya on the other. Every day these names grew in importance with his movement, but even so early as that they foreboded a future of unexampled experience in the Brahmo Somaj. Now the rapture of *Vaishnava* piety is very well known in this country. It has two features, furious excitement, and tender sentimentalism. The hymns that are sung have the utmost vehemence of wild enthusiasm, swelling with the deep noise of the *khole* joined to the din and clash of the *karatal*. The hymns sometimes again melt in the strains of pious tenderness, and tremble on the delicate notes of the violin. Trylokya Nath Sanyal, our beloved apostle of song, joined the missionary body in 1867. His musical genius became a source of wonderful attraction to the pubilc. He was an invaluable acquisition by the side of Bejoy Krishna Goswami, our first enlisted Missionary, the lineal descendant of one of the greatest leaders of *Vaishnavism*. Bejoy Krishna next to Keshub played the most important part in introducing the *Vaishnava* element into the Brahmo Somaj. Brother Tryloyka Nath has been noted, over and above his other powers, for the sweetness of his voice, and his remarkable power of ready poetic composition. Almost every day he improvised tunes, and composed new hymns extempore to suit the sermons and prayers which Keshub delivered. He and Bijoy Krishna, along with the other disciples, added continued fuel to the fire of Keshub's devotions. This new phase of devotional life culminated in the establishment of the *Brahma Utasab*, or Festival in God, in November 1867. Thus within only a year of his separation with the *Adi Somaj*, Keshub presents the development of a high order of devotee, and corrects for ever the devotional deficiency of his nature. The prayers, precepts, and hymns of the *Brahma Utsab* lasted from early morning to nine o'clock in the night, and Keshub as Minister sat out the whole of this service without being tired. The love of God seized and pervaded him in those days, he threw himself headlong into the rapturous excitement of the time. The whole thing came to him as a Divine visitation, as a strange inspiration, which he did not, and could

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not resist. He loudly sang, a thing which his natural shyness had never permitted him to do before ; he had never been seen to weep, but now streams of tears ran down his handsome face. He was turned into a new man.

On the 24th January 1868, the thirty-eight anniversary of the Brahmo Somaj, the foundation-stone of the *Brahma Mandir*,* Keshub's temple of worship, was laid with great pomp.† The greatest of all difficulties, after the rupture with Devendra Nath, was the want of a place of worship. Negotiations for a separate service in the premises of the old Somaj had failed. Keshub and his young friends prayed where they could, in rented rooms, in school houses, in Keshub's bed-room. When the new Brahmo Somaj of India was established securely, and every hope of reconciliation was over, he bestirred himself about building a new place of worship. Keshub's principle was never to delay when he had made a good resolution, never to wait for means and resources when a good undertaking had to be taken in hand. He says in the *Jeevan Veda* "I at first raise the structure, and then think of laying the foundation." In every good or great work that had to be done, he drew from the treasury of his faith, and that was inexhaustible. So, as soon as he matured the plan of a *Mandir*, or place of worship, he borrowed money on his personal responsibility, and bought a piece of land in Machuabazar Street, and as soon as the land was secured, he laid the foundation-stone. The foundation of the *Mandir* was the foundation of his future, of his real, life-long, world-wide ministry. And it was celebrated with adequate solemnity. During the devotional development of the last year Keshub had elaborated an exquisite liturgy of theistic devotions, which is now the order of public worship in almost all Brahmo Somajes in the country, and that was publicly adopted on the occasion. The *Nagar Sankirtan*, or procession for street singing, now adopted by all the Somajes, nay even by the Native Christians, was first introduced. It was pointed and encouraged by hundreds of the educated, in fact by all classes. Great flags inscribed with Theistic mottos were carried by enthusiastic men, and amidst the dense devout crowd, Keshub and his friends walked bare-footed and bare-headed. These processions, now so familiar, marked a point of new departure which gave rise to not a little sensation in Calcutta. They originated with the

**Bharatvarshiya Braha Mandir*, Calcutta.

†For fuller description, *Vide Chiranjib Sarma's Brahmo Samajer Itibritta.*

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Vaishnavas, but they had degenerated into mobbish disorder, and it required great moral courage, and deep religious impulse to be able to borrow and reform them. The foundation-stone of the *Brahma Mandir* was laid in the morning, and in the evening Keshub delivered his lecture on Regenerating Faith.* The audience was very large, and for the first time the highest English officials, from the Viceroy downwards, attended, some of whom for want of space had to stand all the time. Among others, the Rev. Norman Macleod, then on a visit to Calcutta, was present, and bore testimony to Keshub's eloquence which at the time was so largely quoted. Keshub had been already invited to Government House, and the graciousness of the Viceroy in attending the anniversary festival of the Brahmo Somaj made his relations to the latter more intimate. The foundation of the *Brahma Mandir* added to the establishment of the Brahmo Somaj of India, brought double strength and success to Keshub's independent career. With the enthusiasm of this newly achieved success, in March 1868 he left for an extensive missionary tour to the North-Western Provinces and Bombay, where four years before his visit had resulted in awaking the religious enthusiasm of the educated community. After stirring lectures on social and religious subjects he returned not to Calcutta, but to Monghyr, where on his way to Western India, he had left his family for a change of air. A great religious revival was destined to take place here.

Monghyr is an ancient and beautiful town on the banks of the Ganges. It has extensive fields, flourishing bazars, beautiful gardens, picturesque ghats, and hills, and hotsprings in the neighbourhood. Since the East Indian Railway Company had removed their workshops and offices to Jamalpur, about six miles from Monghyr, the latter place has come to hold a large colony of Bengali clerks, who have settled there with their families. These clerks, at the time we speak of, were generally young men, more or less educated, whose free religious tendencies favoured the formation of a new faith. They flocked around Keshub during his sojourn at Monghyr, listened to his prayers and sermons with enthusiasm, and felt themselves profoundly influenced. The ordinary services, and occasional *Brahma Utsabs,* in the form of festivals, took place in the little bungalow which Keshub had rented in the Fort. They were most numerously attended, and the emotions awakened on such occasions were uncontrolled. In fact the devotional excitement,

*Lectures in India

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through which Keshub and his friends had passed during the last eighteen months, broke out with increased violence at Monghyr, and a great religious revival seemed to be at hand. The whole congregation, which multiplied every week, would often be moved to tears, and sobs, and ejaculations that were well nigh hysterical. The women vied with the men in expressing their devotedness and enthusiasm, even the ignorant people from the *bazar* were sometimes attracted. Processions perambulated through the streets at any hour of the day and night, sang at the *ghats* on the riverside, and sometimes kept watches and vigils on the hills in the neighbourhood. The whole town was in ferment. Some danced, one or two fell into fits of unconsciousness, not a few saw visions. Some left worldly avocations, and joined Keshub's missionary body. The Brahmo Somaj was known to the people hitherto as a philosophical sect, given to self-indulgent practices, who hated every form of popular religion. And men now wondered much to behold that the same Brahmo Somaj had fructified into the utmost enthusiasm of popular devotion and faith according to every approved notion of current Hinduism, only leaving out its idolatry. It was a new spectacle, a new experiment. As for our friends in Calcutta, they heard that the great awakening had taken place in Monghyr, and marvellous things were soon to be expected. Reports spread fast that the newly awakened brethern had not only distinguished themselves by their love of God, but that their love and faith towards each other were also unusual. They served and honoured all devotees of God, embraced and fell at each others' feet, begged mutual forgiveness with tears in their eyes, and vowed the warmest and most endless attachment. In short, such an upheaval had never taken place in the Brahmo Somaj before. But these feelings of honour and attachment, felt towards each other, were intensified to the utmost pitch in relation to Keshub. They professed uncommon reverence for him. They prostrated and abased themselves before him most utterly: they began to talk of him in extravagant phraseology such as "Lord," "Master," and "Saviour," so that all this soon provoked comment. It was just like the time of the advent of one of the great ancient prophets like *Sakya Muni,* or *Chaitanya,* and Keshub was openly alluded to as such. Some professed to have seen supernatural sights concerning him; some connected him with Jesus, as the elder and younger sons of the Father; others composed and sang hymns about him in the following style:—

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"Awake, O inmates of the neighbourhood, awake,
"There has come in your midst a *Yogi*, a lover of
"*Brahma*, full of tenderness;
"His throat always glorifies the name of *Hari*,
"And his heart is the abode of the perfect God."

These manifestations of popular faith and reverence Keshub accepted as a passing phase of religious feeling. He never felt he was being worshipped, or that his admirers ran any risk of idolising him. Of all the praises he got he gave the glory to God, and for his own part he took to heart the deep encouragement it conveyed. He felt his opportunity had arrived, that he had received the recognition he wanted, that his mission was revealed to him, that the grace of God had inspired in others the response which he had long waited for. Keshub, as we shall have to point out now and again, was never wanting in a supreme consciousness of his destiny, or of his great powers, or of his unique place in the Brahmo Somaj. He was very deeply convinced, though he seldom said so in those days, that men, not all men, but the Theists of the Brahmo Somaj, were bound to recognise this place, and give him, as their leader, great, nay unquestioning honour. In his private and personal capacity, however, he was embarrassed and ashamed at such honour. He did not want it, but when it came he saw in it the hand of God. It was to him valuable testimony that the spirit of God was with him, that his work was true, and his time had come. He did not want to repel the men who approached him with their homage of admiration, lest he might do harm to any part of their better nature, but he gave frequent hints that what they were doing was liable to misrepresentation. That there was good ground for such fear became soon apparent. Up to this time the popular trait of oriental religions, namely, excessive reverence for holy men, never showed itself in the Brahmo Somaj. In Monghyr, side by side with uncommon devotional excitement, this feeling of "hero-worship" broke out in great exuberance. Such sudden development of personal reverence alarmed a number of Brahmo spectators, and among them, two well-known Brahmo missionaries, who hitherto had been warmly attached to Keshub. One of these was Pandit Bejoy Krishna Goswami. They wrote to some of the newspapers, formally brought the charge of worshipping Keshub against their fellow-disciples, and they unreservedly accused Keshub himself of conniving at, if not directly encouraging it. They said they had made many private remonstrances against

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these practices, but without effect, nay, their protests had only provoked a greater persistency in the extravagances they found it their duty to condemn. They stirred up a considerable amount of public agitation, and succeeded in producing much ill-feeling against Keshub and his friends. Now, as this charge was never wholly abandoned, though often contradicted, and has appeared in one form or another in various subsequent stages, it is necessary to examine how much, if any, truth there may be in it. Nothing better could be done in this respect than to translate portions of a letter which Keshub wrote about the time to a friend who had made a candid inquiry to know his views on the subject. "Those to whom I have opened my whole mind and heart have tried to make me guilty before the public of the most frightful and soul-rending charges. I have been charged with trying to destroy loving prayerfulness unto God, the only Saviour, a principle which has been the object and faith of all my life. Very near friends now charge me as proud and hypocritical, the robber of God's supremacy, the propagator of my own worship. I have no wish to defend my character. It is enough I am guiltless before God. . . . God is the only Saviour of sinners. Both man and the external world can be helps in the attainment of salvation. The highest honour to man, only as man, can never be harmful. But to offer reverence to a teacher or a good man as equal to God, or as the only infallible incarnation of God, is against *Brahmo Dharma*. I have never fallen into the error of supposing that if I pray to God as a mediator for others, He will forgive or save them through my intercessions, or my virtues. . . . I *have never approved of the manner in which some of my friends honour me.** Because in the first place I am not worthy of such honours. I always feel that my life is not so good as men give me credit for. There is no glory due to me on account of the benefits which some friends have received from my service, God is the only source of such benefits: . . . I must admit that amongst my Brahmo friends there are a good many whose love to God and holiness of character are greater than my own, and are the special means of my salvation. *In the second place external honours are, in my judgment, unnecessary and improper. Real love and honour lie in the heart, and if their outward expressions decrease, there is not much harm. While*

*We have italicised these important passages, because they apply to numerous subsequent occasions of Keshub Chunder Sen's life, as well as after his death, when similar modes of honour were attempted to be paid to him.

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on the other hand too much expression may do mischief to weak-minded men ; I have repeatedly expressed my hesitation to receive such honours. But I have no right to interfere with the freedom of others. It has ever been against my taste and conviction to bring men to do what I like by command or entreaty."

From this, and from other quotations which could be made at great length from published lectures and prayers, it will be evident that whatever Keshub's self-estimate might be, he was free from the sin of arrogating divine honours. We cannot, however, as readily say that some of his more enthusiastic disciples did not, in repeated instances, want to impute to him claims which he never himself meant to make. In consequence of such unwisdom he and his cause have had to suffer grievously in public estimation. When by utterances, similar to those quoted above, he disabused them, the more credulous and weakerminded among them could not bear the shock of knowing the plain truth, and incontinently left the Somaj. This actually happened at Monghyr. Two men, one of them a Brahmo missionary of long standing, left Keshub's flock when they found their estimate of him was contradicted by himself, and they joined a mystical sect of orthodox *Vaishnavas*. When therefore Keshub was urged to put down authoritatively any extravagance of personal attitude towards him, he argued, as he did at Monghyr, that he had no right to interfere with other men's liberty, that if he found error or extravagance in any one, he never felt justified to reject him on that account, but tried to keep him near, and gradually wean him from the errors ; in short Keshub felt that "he would be guilty of grave sin if he cruelly turned out any brother for such faults."

But if it be true that the divine and prophetic pretensions ascribed to him were unfounded, it is also true that the revival at Monghyr left deep and abiding impressions on Keshub's character. It pointed out to him the direction in which the religion of the Brahmo Somaj could be made popular in the land. Hence every subsequent revival he brought about, resembled this in essential features. It developed the personal affinities between himself and some of his followers, creating thus the basis of all his apostolical organisations in future. It created for the first time that mysticism and semi-supernaturalism of faith in an active special Providence, the under-current of which always continued to run in Keshub's movements henceforth. The abnormal excitement of emotions, first begun at Monghyr, undoubtedly emasculated a good many unripe minds in Keshub's Church. No doubt a tendency to exaggerated ideas

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of Keshub's place and functions in the Brahmo Somaj became chronic in the constitution of some of his nearest and dearest friends. In fact, henceforth in the Brahmo Somaj there were two strong parallel parties always present, one of whom honoured Keshub almost to the point of worship ; and the other consistently undervalued him, suspected his principles, and denied him his true position. Of these two parties Keshub unreservedly preferred and trusted the former. The latter he was strongly inclined to accuse of rationalism and infidelity. One principal reason of this was that he felt the one-sided intellectual education, and consequent scepticism, which the rising generation had so deeply imbibed, that the profane and irreverent tendencies a foreign material civilization every day spread, could be counteracted only by continually exacting the sentiment of reverence both towards God and man, and that these strong feelings and personal affinities alone could give him the groundwork whereon he might construct a new religious organisation and a new order of spirituality.

With a band of devoted followers, friends, and co-workers, Keshub Chunder Sen left Monghyr in August 1868 to spend a few months at Simla on the Himalayas, whither Lord Lawrence, the Viceroy, whose acquaintance he had made in the previous year, had invited him. They had met by appointment at Bankipur. This conference at Bankipur had given rise to the discussion of a subject which was to mark a most important turning point in Keshub's character as a reformer. It was the enactment of a Brahmo marriage law. Since the celebration of that first Brahmo marriage in 1861, the leaders had a secret doubt whether such marriages had the sanction of the prevailing laws of the land. The opinion of the Advocate General of Bengal had been taken, and he had distinctly pronounced against their legality. Thereupon, general meetings of the Brahmo Somaj of India were held, and resolutions were passed to memorialise the Government to sanction Brahmo marriages. The unpleasant incidents of the secession, however, had thrown the subject into the background. But as soon as Keshub, now the sole leader of the Brahmo Somaj of India, and its Secretary, found time to reflect on the matter, he felt the necessity of immediate action. And now unforeseen facilities presented themselves in his way. The warm and practical interest which the noble-minded statesman who then presided over the Government of India manifested both in Keshub personally, and in the Brahmo Somaj movement in general, emboldened him to open the subject to the Viceroy who readily responded, and invited him

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to Simla, the summer residence of the Government, where greater opportunities for discussing the subject, and, if possible, of taking an initiative, would occur. So Keshub left for the hills with his family and friends, and Lord Lawrence not only accommodated him in the extensive range of buildings at *Boileaugunge*, generally set apart for distinguished native guests, but sent him a private present of Rs. 500 to defray his necessary expenses. Mrs. Sen and the children were not very happy in the cold climate of Simla, but the grand scenery, and bracing air, after his recent profound spiritual experiences at Monghyr, brought healing joy to Keshub's soul. It was the first time he saw the *Himalayas*, and his heart went back to the glorious times when those mountains were the abode of the holiest and wisest of India's sons. Their spirituality came down in torrents, like the sacred rivers, to the plains below, and fertilised and enriched the nation's mind. Keshub, as often as he visited the *Himalayas*, realised he was the descendant and successor of that holy race of saints. He felt this so intensely the first time he was there, that he took great pains to write an exhortation under the title of "A Voice from the *Himalayas*." It produced a singular impression.* But his time was chiefly taken up in interviews with the Government officials to give them his views on the contemplated Marriage Bill which was introduced into the Governor-General's Council on the 10th September

*It began thus :—

"Sons and Daughters of India, dearly beloved brethren,—Awake, arise, the blessed morning of your redemption is come. The Great God, our Merciful Father, standeth at your doors with the treasures of redeeming grace in His hand, and summoneth you to rise. Delay not then, but obey the holy call instantly. Rise from your death-like sleep; let your ears hear the joyful sound of salvation; let your eyes drink the sweet light of the new day; let your lips praise the Redeemer's name; let your hands serve His holy feet. Long, too long, have you slept on the bed of idolatry and corruption; long have you borne the oppressions and cruelties of a heartless hierarchy, with hands and feet enchained in the gloomy prison-cell of superstition. Long have you suffered from acute moral diseases and spiritual poverty. The cup of your sufferings is brimful. Your condition is truly pitiable. It draws tears from human eyes. And shall Infinite Mercy look on with indifference and apathy? No, it cannot be. Your wailings and lamentations have penetrated the vaults of heaven and reached the Father's ears, and He hath hastened to relieve and rescue those that have cried unto Him. Beloved India, thy night of darkness and sorrow is over. Sing the Father's mercy, all ye men and women of India. Sing, mountains and hills, rivers, streams, forests and plains, cities and villages. Ye winds of heaven, carry the message of His redeeming mercy in all directions. May He bless my humble Voice, and stir up a response in every heart! Blessed be the Holy and Merciful God for ever!

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1868. Towards the end of the year Keshub returned to Calcutta very much refreshed in health and spirits, and exultant over the prospects of a law that would give the sanction of Government to all his most important social reforms.

The *Brahma Mandir,* the new temple of God, was building very fast in the meantime, Keshub himself and his brother missionaries were incessantly active in securing contributions, and enlisting public sympathy. Most zealous of all these zealous workers was Amrita Lal Bose, an energetic Brahmo missionary, who personally superintended the construction, and spared neither time nor trouble to complete the works. Keshub held the anniversary service in the unfinished temple, and fully resolved to open the sanctuary for public worship in the course of 1869. In anticipation of that event he gave his anniversary lecture in January on the "Future Church,"* indicating the principles on which the new temple was to carry on its operations. The church of the future, he said in substance, must proceed on the teachings of history. "It is only from an induction of facts that we can divine what is to happen in future." Though the records of religion show the prevalence of matter-worship at one time, and man-worship at another, though the principle of authority has preponderated at one time, and the principle of freedom at another, yet "history also shows that no religious system recorded therein is wholly false." It also shows that "the doctrines and institutions of different sects have been found in some cases to resemble each other in their essential features." The inference from all this is that the future church must take what is truth from every prevailing system of religion. The worship of the church of the future will be through the beauties and sublimities of nature. "The material universe is a great religious teacher, and the Sublime and Beautiful in nature exercise a vast moral influence on the mind." True worship is also through the qualities of the human mind. "The world within manifests the great Creator's power, wisdom, and mercy. The soul is God's work as much as the outer world, nay a far nobler work it is, as revealing the higher attributes of the Divinity, and our relations to Him." "Besides the general respect due to every mind, peculiar respect is due to superior minds. . . . Far greater honour has been accorded to God's more devoted servants—good men, reformers, prophets—than to dead matter, and ordinary humanity. . . How will these three be respected, and yet the unity of God strictly

*Lectures in India.

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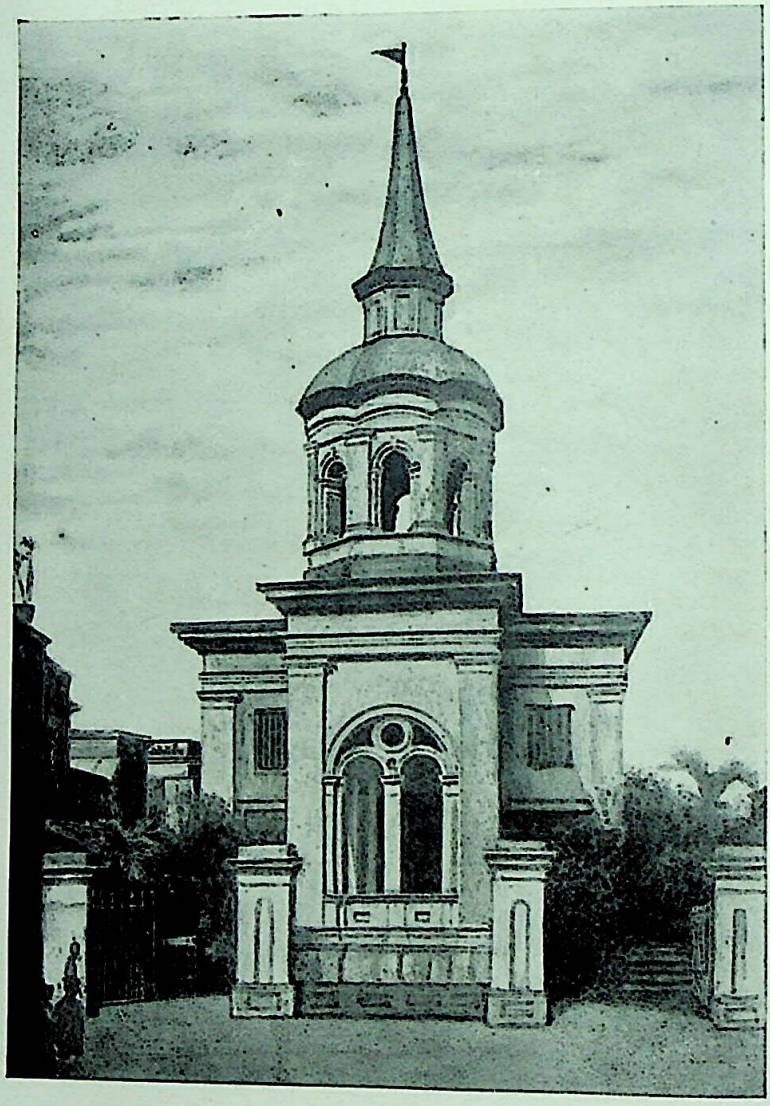

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and uncompromisingly maintained?" For he is careful to observe that so far has this homage to moral goodness and greatness been abused as to sink into man-worship. Thus [illegible] has been deified, and instead of being honoured [illegible], has been worshipped as God in human form." [illegible] of the Future Church, he briefly states, will be [illegible]erhood of God and Brotherhood of Man," and its [illegible]ll be "the gospel of mercy as represented in the parable Prodigal Son—unsurpassed in the literature of Divine [illegible]." And he concludes by observing that "the Future Church of India must be thoroughly an Indian Church. The future religion of the world will be the common religion of all nations, but in each nation it will have an indigenous growth, and assume a peculiar and distinctive character." It will be easy to perceive how in this preliminary statement there remained all the germs of Keshub's characteristic development of faith, worship, and doctrine that was to take place in no remote future.

The *Brahma Mandir*[1] was formally opened on the 22nd August, 1869. Its history is the history of the spiritual progress of Keshub himself, and of the faithful band of men who followed him thus far. The ceremonies and services were most imposing, and an enthusiastic congregation of old and young, of men and women gathered from early morning, and remained till late at night. Keshub described the objects and principles of the institution thus:—"This building is established with the object of paying reverence to all truths that exist in the world. This temple is founded with the object that all quarrel, all misunderstanding, all pride of caste may be destroyed, and all brotherly feeling may be perpetuated. Those *Acharyas* (ministers) who will give their precepts from the pulpit of this *Mandir*, should be looked upon by all as sinful men. They give precepts because being able to do so, they have been charged with that duty. The names and the language that are applied to God shall never be applied to any human being in this temple." Keshub in making these definite statements about the *Acharyas* must have foreseen some of the difficulties that are likely to arise in his own case. The declaration of principles that was read has buried underneath the pulpit. This pulpit became the subject of endless quarrel as to whether it should be kept or not, to symbolise his

[1] "Brahmo Mandir (Church of the New Dispensation, Calcutta)

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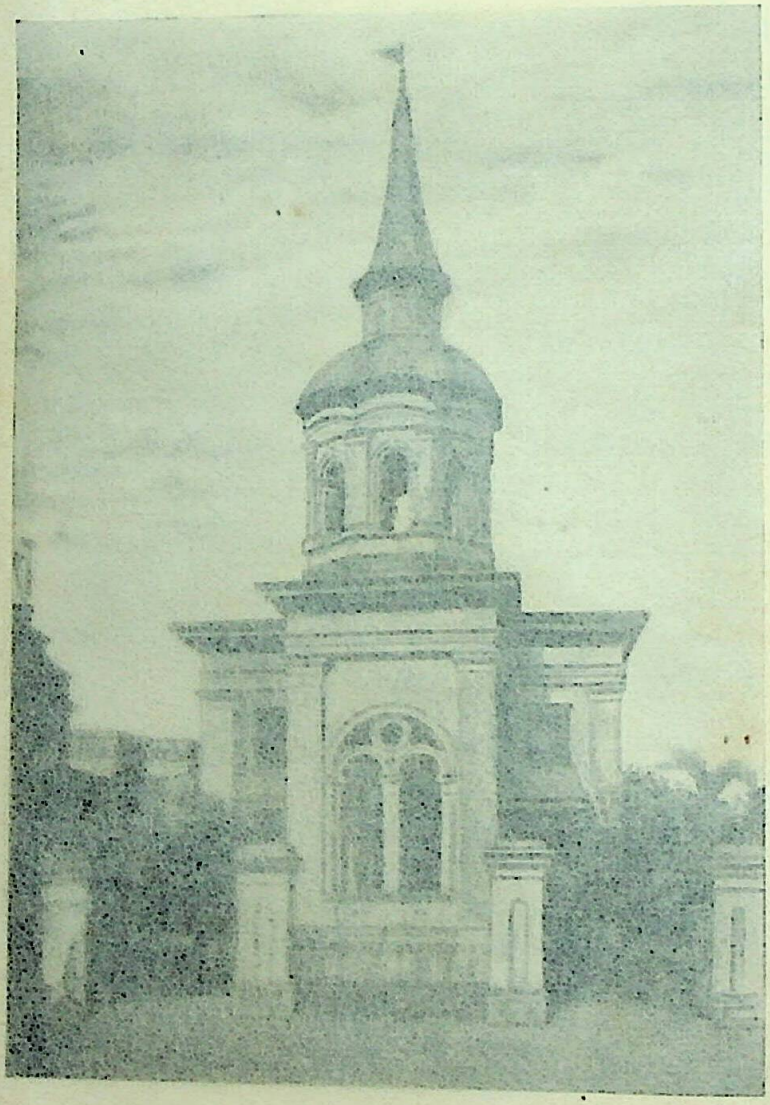

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and uncompromisingly maintained?" For he is careful to observe that "so far has this homage to moral goodness and greatness been abused as to sink into man-worship. Thus many a prophet has been deified, and instead of being honoured as a teacher, has been worshipped as God in human form." The creed of the Future Church, he briefly states, will be "the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man," and its gospel will be "the gospel of mercy as represented in the parable of the Prodigal Son—unsurpassed in the literature of Divine grace." And he concludes by observing that "the Future Church of India must be thoroughly an Indian Church. The future religion of the world will be the common religion of all nations, but in each nation it will have an indigenous growth, and assume a peculiar and distinctive character." It will be easy to perceive how in this preliminary statement there remained all the germs of Keshub's characteristic development of faith, worship, and doctrine that was to take place in no remote future.

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**Bharatvarshiya Brahma Mandir.* (Church of the New Dispensation, Calcutta)

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relationship with the congregation. This quarrel nothing can end except a faithful interpretation of the principles declared by Keshub himself. The declaration, mainly borrowed from the principles laid down by Raja Ram Muhun Roy in the establishment of the original Brahmo Somaj at Jorasanko, we give below:—

"To-day, by Divine grace, the public worship of God is instituted in these premises for the use of the Brahmo community. Every day, at least every week, the One only God without a second, the Perfect and Infinite, the Creator of all, Omnipresent, Almighty, All-knowing, All-merciful, and All-holy, shall be worshipped in these premises. No created object shall be worshipped here. No man, or inferior being, or material object shall be worshipped here, as identical with God, or like unto God, or as an incarnation of God; and no prayer or hymn shall be offered or chanted unto, or in the name of any except God. No carved or painted image, *no external symbol which has been or may hereafter be used by any sect for the purpose of worship, or the remembrance of a particular event, shall be preserved here.** No creature shall be sacrified here. Neither eating, nor drinking, nor any manner of mirth or amusement shall be allowed here. No created being or object that has been, or may hereafter be worshipped by any sect shall be ridiculed or contemned in the course of the Divine service to be conducted here. No book shall be acknowledged or revered as the infallible word of God; yet no book which has been, or may hereafter be acknowledged by any sect to be infallible, shall be ridiculed, or condemned. No sect shall be vilified, ridiculed, or hated. No prayer, hymn, sermon, or discourse to be delivered or used here, shall countenance or encourage any manner of idolatry, sectarianism, or sin. Divine service shall be conducted here in such spirit and manner as may enable all men and women, irrespective of distinctions of caste, colour, and condition, to unite in one family, eschew all manner of error and sin, and advance in wisdom, faith, and righteousness. The congregation of the "*Brahma Mandir* of India" shall worship God in these premises according to the rules and principles hereinbefore set forth.

"Peace! Peace! Peace!

"KESHUB CHUNDER SEN."

*We have italicised this passage to point out its bearing upon the late unhappy controversies.

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The successful establishment and opening of the *Brahma Mandir*, when a large number of the most prominent men who now constitute the Brahmo community, men like Anand Mohan Bose, Krishna Behari Sen, Shiva Nath Shastri accepted the Theistic covenant, marked the first period of Keshub's independent ministry and leadership. The fame of the Brahmo Somaj overspread the whole world, and drew special attention in England. Keshub now felt that he must carry his message to other lands and nations.

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CHAPTER VII.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN IN ENGLAND, 1870.*

SUDDENLY towards the end of 1869, when all the activities of his infant organisation were centred in maturing the work of the *Brahmo Somaj of India* and the *Brahma Mandir,* Keshub made an announcement in the *Indian Mirror,* his organ, that he was to visit England within a short time. As such an idea had never entered into any one's remotest calculation, and Keshub was the mainspring of every work and attempt, the announcement caused a considerable shock of surprise and pain. Never unfolding his plans till they were on the point of execution, or after the execution had begun, Keshub's undertakings were always a sort of surprise. As with growing years and responsibilities the plans gained in magnitude and importance, their sensational character grew in proportion. There is no doubt he secretly fostered the wish, and sought for the opportunity of visiting Europe. But he never opened his mind to anybody on the subject. He half-doubted whether such a great enterprise could be accomplished. He feared dissuasions and obstacles would be thrown in his way if people knew of it prematurely. He wanted to put all doubt and dissuasion at an end. And hence the sudden, and what seemed to us, the cruel announcement. This was Keshub's manner of doing things always. It has been already claimed for Keshub that he was the founder of that itinerant missionary activity in the Bramo Somaj which has developed such remarkable results. Beginning from 1860, every year he undertook some missionary tour, generally towards the autumn. These missionary travels were fruitful in multiplying provincial Brahmo Somajes, and creating a theistic centre almost in every important town of India. His reputation as a preacher, as in fact the missionary-in-chief of the Brahmo Somaj, had penetrated into every part of the country. Through newspaper reports it had reached England, and from England spread into other countries. As early as 1861, a correspondence with eminent English Theists had begun. Friends occasionally invited him

*For detailed accounts, *vide* Diary in England and Lectures in England.

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to Europe. The profound sensation caused by the presence of Raja Ram Mohun Roy in England and France in the year 1831, he fully remembered, and warmly dwelt upon many times. Often in his mind he formed plans of proceeding on a missionary tour to the Western world. But the enterprise had always the idea of danger in his mind, and, meditating on the fate of Ram Mohun Roy and Dwarka Nath Tagore, he must have suffered many a recoil. Keshub, however, was not constituted to give up any great enterprise for the glory of God through the hesitancy of fear. So he matured his determination, and made the announcement. He gave a preliminary lecture on "England and India"* in the Town Hall, a few weeks before his departure, in which he modestly explained the object of his contemplated travels as that of a learner. The audience, and friends outside, made up a sum of money for his travelling expenses. But he had to draw from his own funds to meet all the necessities of such an expensive journey. The excellent Lord Mayo, then the Governor-General of India, to whom Lord Lawrence, Keshub's patron, had introduced him, and other magnates of the Government gave him warm letters of introduction; and Lord Larwence who had retired a little while ago, and sent him many a cordial message, was now in England to give him a fitting welcome. Sir John Bowring asked him to be his guest, the British and Foreign Unitarian Association invited him to accept their hospitality. All this was real encouragement, and gracious opportunity, but the deepest impulse for the hazardous undertaking came from his own brave heart. It was another instance of the mysterious guidance which always surrounded him, and suggested to him his true course. So in sturdy unwavering faith about his prospects in the distant land, Keshub left Calcutta for Europe in the P. and O.Co.'s Steam Ship *Multan* on the 15th February, 1870. A large company of young Hindus, almost all of them intimately attached to him, left in the same ship, for purposes of education in England, and amongst them all was Prasanna Kumar Sen,† Keshub's devoted friend, and servitor, who left a lucrative post under the East Indian Railway Company to follow him. We mustered in large numbers at the P. and O. Docks at Garden Reach, but our hearts were not exultant. The parting on that February morning at the door of Keshub's little cabin near the engine room was most sad. The stewards were moving uncon-

*Lectures in India.
†Brahmo Missionary.

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cernedly about in their shirt-sleeves, the interior of the ship had that strange sea-smell suggestive of melancholy separations, bad weathers, and uncomfortable sensations. We were soon told to clear out, it was time to leave. We loaded Keshub with presents of fruits, sweetmeats, and everything we imagined he might need. Each one gave him a tender hearty embrace, and the demonstrations were so repeated and effusive, that it was a relief both to Keshub himself and his fellow-passengers when the *Multan* weighed anchor, and slowly glided down the river. He continually waved his pocket handkerchief which grew fainter and fainter, till he was lost to view entirely. We turned our faces backwards into vacancy, and returned home with heavy hearts.

That Keshub had misgivings about the future management of his Church, when he left on his distant voyage, was evident from the parting instructions he left to the Brahmo missionaries and the congregation. To the present writer he left the casket and seal (given him when he was made *Acharya* of the Brahmo Somaj), and he also left solemn injunctions about the spiritual well-being of the congregation of the *Brahma Mandir*. Those principles, stated fourteen years before his death, have a sad and strange application to the present time. But who is there to remember them, or act up to their leading? "In the progress of religious life," said he, "the spiritual guide (*guru*) may be a help, but never the goal. No single individual can be a complete spiritual guide. Every man is a guide in proportion as his life and precepts help us on the way to spirituality. Speaking of living guides, my own case forcibly comes into view. Those who think they have derived any benefit from me ought to give me reverence. But it is just the same in regard to the other missionaries also. From what I have taught, or am now teaching, or may teach in future, I cannot call any man my exclusive disciple. This to me is a matter of special rejoicing. There cannot be between myself and others the exact relationship of teacher and disciple. Any one calling me his only teacher may find obstacles on his way to salvation. He, who accepts and follows all the ideas in my mind, might be called my disciple. But even in that case he ought to believe that it is not I, but my God Who is his real guide. If a man on listening to four or five precepts given by me, calls me his *guru*, he is guilty of untruth. If any man gives me greater reverence than he gives God, it is the weakness of his faith. I never believe I teach a single thing of religion to any man. It is the object of my life to draw my brethren before the pre-

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sence of my God, He will teach them directly, may my personality never stand between. He, who, according to my advice, seeks the solution of every difficulty directly from God alone, is my true disciple. Those who profess to love me, but do not love the brethren whom I have brought here speak falsehood,"

"On those matters wherein the members of the congregation differ from each other, they ought to come to an understanding while I am still here. On certain subjects it is permissible that differences of opinion should exist among them. Such, for instance, as 1st, Whether God sends any great men ; 2nd, Special Providence ; 3rd, Whether salvation is possible without *bhakti*, or the absorbing love of God ; 4th, Whether without repentance even the attempt at religious life is possible ; 5th, Reverence to spiritual guides (*guru-bhakti*) 6th, Asceticism, or the renunciation of the world. There are differences of opinion on these subjects among *Brahmos*, and there ought to be. Let this be known from the beginning. He who believes in these things is a *Brahmo* ; he who does not believe on these things wholly, is also a *Brahmo*. There must be a declaration to agree on general grounds in spite of such differences. So long as we believe in fundamental doctrines, we will worship together in the *Brahma Mandir*. My opinions are not yet sufficiently known or expressed. Those who say things in my name, say a great many things that are their own. If any one says that God is not good, but cruel, he violates a fundamental doctrine, and there can be no union in such a case. In small matters, in details, there should be no interference with mutual liberty. There can be no Trust Deed to the *Brahma Mandir* until the liabilities are paid."

Keshub landed at Marseilles on the 19th March, after an interesting, and on the whole pleasant voyage. He was not a very bad sailor, and the sea was tolerably calm. His first experience of a European city he always described very graphically. The accommodation at the French hotel was exceedingly sumptuous ; and when he laid his weary limbs on the well-polished mahogany bedstead, the spring mattresses were pressed so deep that he was alarmed, and felt as if he was going to sink to the floor ! He called out to his companion to mark if he was still visible on the surface ! On rising in the morning, he looked out from the window, and was greatly astonished to find the whole population running away. Every body had taken to his heels ! On enquiry he was told that it was so cold outside, and everybody was so earnest about his own occupation, that they preferred running to walking. This was con-

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trary to all oriental notions of propriety, and Keshub thought such haste was quite ridiculous, he could never wholly reconcile it with his sense of decorum. London was reached on the 21st of March. Though he had received invitations from several influential persons to receive their hospitality, and the Rev. Robert Spears, on behalf of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, was prepared to take charge of his accommodation, he preferred to secure his own quarters in the neighbourhood of some of his young countrymen resident in the great metropolis, and among them his nephew, Mr. B. L. Gupta,* who had gone to the railway station to receive him. The next business was to make use of the important official introductions he held. But before he did that, he saw Miss Cobbe, Miss Collet, and other old correspondents and friends. His staunch friend and patron, Lord John Lawrence, in the meanwhile called upon him, and did all he could to facilitate his progress in the making of acquaintances. So the first month was passed in presentations and calls. Though he preached for Dr. James Martineau at Little Portland Street on the 10th April,† where a distinguished congregation gathered to hear him, Keshub's first public appearance was the welcome soirée in the Hanover Square Rooms on the 12th April, arranged for him by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Invitations were issued on an extensive scale, and the representatives of almost every English religious denomination attended the meeting. The speeches and proceedings which have been repeatedly published, were characterised by a cordial harmony, which seemed for the moment to indicate that all sectarianism and religious animosity were at an end in the British Isles. There were three or four members of Parliament, headed by Lord Lawrence, then in the zenith of his Indian reputation. Dr. Cappel represented advanced Roman Catholicism ; Dean Stanley stood for the noblest phase of thought in the Church of England, the Rev. Stopford Brook, then the prince of Broad Church clergymen, was there ; the Venerable Dr. Marks, the patriarch of reformed English Judaism attended ; the late Mr. Samuel Sharpe, the Egyptologist, and Dr. James Martineau, the metaphysician, represented the two wings of Unitarianism ; Dr.

*I. C. S. Judge of the Calcutta High Court.

†"The congregation," says he in the private diary he kept up to May, "numbers about 500. I take a text 'In Him we live, and move, and have our being,' and explain God's reality and omnipresence. . . . I feel a little awkwardness, and as if I am not quite at home." Nevertheless he made a very good impression.

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Mullens was the fit representative of Anglo-Indian missionaries, and there were dozens of others of lesser note, men who flocked by an unaccountable impulse from every Christian denomination, whom no human attraction could bring together before. Every one did his very best on the occasion, every speech was the outburst of sympathy and goodwill for the *Brahmo Somaj*. Well might the Dean of Westminster compare the spectacle before him to "the great national sanctuary committed to his care, which enshrines the virtue and genius of every sect alike in which the enmities of twenty generations lie buried and forgiven." Keshub took advantage of the harmony of the proceedings to adjure his hearers thus:—

"The peculiarly catholic feature of this meeting interests me deeply. I see gathered on this great platform ministers of ten different sections of Christ's Church assembled together to honour India, to encourage India in her great work of self-reformation. * * * * I come here, my friends, to study Christianity in its living and spiritual forms. I do not come to study the doctrines of Christianity, but truly Christian life as displayed and illustrated in England. I come to study the spirit of Christian philanthropy, of Christian self-sacrifice, and honourable Christian self-denial, knowing that England has become a great nation, not merely through commerce and trade, but through the self-denying influence of a life-giving religion. * * * * Now, I throw myself entirely upon your indulgence and sympathy. I have explained to you the great object which has brought me here. I dare say you sympathise with me. I tell you that, though there are matters of difference between myself and you all, yet still the great work of abolishing idolatry and caste in India must enlist the sympathy of every one here present. Let us, therefore, harmoniously co-operate to give India the knowledge of the pure and saving God. Let us give India true brotherhood, universal brotherhood, which shall not recognise the distinctions of caste at all. Your destinies and the destinies of India are interwoven with each other; your interests and my interests are identified; and I hope, therefore, you will no longer withhold from us that active sympathy, that friendly co-operation, which you have for a long time denied us—not because you were wanting in sympathy, but because you did not know enough of us. Let us all unite, for the glory of India, and for the glory of England, to discharge those great duties which we owe to these two countries, which an all-wiwse and all-merciful God has united together in the inscrutable economy of His providence."

Such a reception, spontaneous and unexpected, was a fitting earnest of the brilliant career that lay before Keshub Chunder Sen in England. His engagements to preach in London became every day more numerous, and wherever he went he was received with equal cordiality and enthusiasm. He preached mostly from Unitarian and Congregationalist pulpits, but various societies sought to secure his co-operation, chief amongst which might be mentioned such heterogenous bodies as the Peace Society, the Ragged School Union, different kinds

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of Temperance Societies, and the Swedenborg Society. But his private life in his lodgings was not devoid of pleasant experiences. Keshub received many illustrious visitors. He, on one occasion, had a visit from John Stuart Mill. There was so little in common between the two great men that a call from the author of Unitarianism was not within range of the social expectations of the Hindu apostle. Mr. Mill called one morning without appointment when Keshub was writing his home letters, which he begged permission to finish before he could entertain his visitor as he wished. Keshub's Hindu companions were full of consternation lest offence should be taken at this request, but the great philosopher was too simple to take it amiss. He interested himself in a newspaper, and quietly waited till Keshub had finished his correspondence, and found time to attend to him. They had a conversation on general subjects, after which Mill resisted every effort on Keshub's part to accompany him to the door. The latter was greatly impressed with the philosopher's courtesy and meekness.

The Female Suffrage Society drew much sympathy from Keshub, he says:—

"I am delighted to see there are so many lady speakers,—and some of them spoke beautifully with no less rhetoric than fluency—and that they are so earnestly fighting to get admission into Parliament. The movement is likely to succeed in this free country, but it will take some time."

The first fall of snow greatly interested him.

"This day," says he (March 26th), "for the first time in my life, I see snow falling in beautiful flakes. It is a shower of snow; within a short time everything becomes white—streets, house-tops, trees, and even the umbrellas and dress of those who are going about. I am so highly delighted with this wonderful natural phenomenon that I cannot resist the temptation of going out into the *veranda*, and receiving a good sprinkling of flakes on my overcoat."

Keshub does not say much of the public men of England. Of Mr. Gladstone who invited him to breakfast, he says, "Our host is a very genial and kind-hearted man, though his appearance shows he has the tremendous weight of the whole Government on his shoulders." He contents himself by speaking of Mr. Disraeli as "the astute and shrewd-looking leader of the Opposition." The first time he saw the Queen* was on the opening ceremony of the new buildings of the University of London.

"Her Majesty," he says, "is a plain-looking woman in plain dress, simple yet dignified. She makes a graceful bow to the assembly. The Vice-Chancellor reads the speech to the Queen, she hands over her

*Queen Victoria.

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reply, and in the most distinct manner declares the building to be 'opened.' Thus ends the brief ceremony, and the Royal family disappears."

After he had preached at several places, the anniversary meeting of the Ragged School Union, presided over by the late Lord Shaftesbury, impressed him most favorably. He is reported to have said:—

"The stupendousness of the work of charity which this Ragged School Union has incessantly carried on for the last quarter of a century is indeed amazing. That more than 300,000 persons of the poorest class have been saved from ignorance and poverty; that there are 3,200 voluntary teachers, who are at present engaged in the work of educating the poor, and have accepted that duty as a labour of love; that more than 200 persons who formerly belonged to the poorest and most destitute class are now engaged in the honourable avocation of teaching persons who now belong to that class; that there are scores of young accomplished ladies who are engaged day after day in the work of giving instruction to the helpless young children, very wild and rough, who surround them,—these are facts whose eloquence tells us as no mere theory could tell us, that those who are engaged as teachers, or conductors or supporters of these Ragged Schools, are really entitled to the gratitude of all those who have hearts to feel."

Carrying with him truculent associations of the combativeness of John Bull, Keshub was greatly struck with the agitation systematically kept up by the leaders of the Peace Society in England. Meeting an august assembly on the 17th May, at the fifty-fourth anniversary of that Society, called together, and pledged to make war upon war, well might he exclaim: "I really feel thrilled in the midst of this assembly, I hope and trust, that under this vigorous Ministry every legitimate attempt will be made to save your Christian country from the evils of war, and from the reproach of encouraging war. I really cannot tell how the followers of the Prince of Peace can ever go to war."

The Temperance reformers, who met at St. James's Hall for the suppression of Liquor Traffic, gave Keshub some energetic experience of popular enthusiasm in England. After his speech on the evils of the liquor traffic in India had been finished, the vast audience stood up, waved their hats, and gave him three cheers in the fashion which the English alone know how to give. He had never witnessed it before, and never forgot it afterwards. Hundreds of men and women, pressed forward to shake hands with him. which they did so heartily that the mild reformer feared his arms would be torn from their sockets. They thrust their faces into his carriage, and vociferated, "God bless ye!" These demonstrations delighted him, amused him, perhaps now and then alarmed him. Great

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meetings followed one after another. English cities sometimes take strange fancies to idolise certain individuals for a season, and London specially suffers from such fits of sporadic hero-worship. But the hero is very seldom a theological character. They made an exception in Keshub's favour, and though a religious reformer, he became the rage of the day. There was no newspaper that did not chronicle his doings, and there was no English town to which his fame did not spread. *Punch*, who is always so sensitive to popular impulses, came out with a characteristic little poem beginning thus:—

"Who among all living men
"Is this Keshub Chunder Sen?
"Is he big as a bull, or small as a wren
"This Keshub Chunder Sen?"

There was a very vast assembly on the 6th May, in Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle at Newington, on the other side of the Thames, and Keshub gave his well-known lecture on "England's Duties to India."* This discourse, being general in its character, dealing with administrative and educational questions largely, made the most widespread sensation both in England and India. It was also critical and national. He passed certain strictures on the treatment which the natives of this country get from their vigorous Anglo-Indian neighbours, and also on the attitude of the Government of India towards the whole subject of liquor traffic. Lord Lawrence, the recognised head of the Anglo-Indian community, presided at the meeting. The irritation caused by the lecture was quite disproportionate to the amount and nature of criticism made. For the time Keshub was abused by the Anglo-Indian Press with an energy and unanimity which caused some anxiety to his friends. Every Englishman who subscribed for our newspaper the *Indian Mirror*, withdrew his name, Keshub's motives were cruelly aspersed, and one irate Briton in Bombay publicly threw out a challenge that he would give Rs. 500 to any one who would venture to read the lecture on England's Duties to India in his presence while he stood horsewhip in hand! Keshub himself was imperturbable at all this rage, his universal popularity in England carried safely through it, and when he returned home, much of the fury had died out. Yet for a long while afterwards, Englishmen in India regarded him with very suspicious feelings, and often asserted that his head was turned by the indiscriminate "lionizing" administered to him in England.

**Vide* Lectures in England.

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How and by what process this unpopularity disappeared, and he came to have the unbounded confidence of the Anglo-Indian community, is more than we can describe. Undoubtedly his integrity, his wide humanity, his lofty virtue survived every calumny, and disarmed every suspicion. It may also be said perhaps that no human being has a deeper perception of honesty and worth than the real Englishman. And when he saw that the man who had ventured to point out his faults had done so with motives that were blameless, for the good of the Hindu and the Englishman alike, he appreciated Keshub all the more for it ; his courage and frankness drew greater confidence than he had got before. Thus Keshub conquered the opposition which, in any other case, might have proved most formidable.

On the 28th May, another great meeting was held at St. James's Hall, where he described his attitude to Christ and Christianity. The London *Spectator* came out with the following comment :—

"A unique sort of lecture on 'Christ and Christianity'* was delivered last Saturday at St. James's Hall, by Keshub Chunder Sen, from the stand-point of Indian Theism. Coming to the Bible in the course of an independent religious experience, he said that he had there found what helped and nourished him, and in describing this in detail, he included not only the general teachings of the Gospel, but 'the sublime egotism of Christ,' who constantly preached himself as *'the way'* to God." But Christianity held a different language from that of Christ; it was split up into one-sided sects, who placed salvation in various externalities; and not in 'Christ in the heart.' The moderation and kindliness with which Mr. Sen indicated the shortcomings of English Christianity, and the fervent eloquence with which he painted the realities of a true spiritual faith, made a very favourable impression upon a large and mixed audience."

Spending thus in various engagements nearly two months in the metropolis, acquiring great reputation which extended through the length and breadth of the British Isles, Keshub left for the provincial towns of England. Friendly young ladies wrote *receipes* of his daily diet, and circulated them among his intending hosts, and the indefatigable Mr. Spears, the then Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, who had taken over the whole charge of Keshub's accommodation, drew up a routine of his daily habits which were published in handbills. These documents went in the following style :—

"Mr. Sen desires to retire at 10 o'clock p.m. He takes a cup of tea (no bread) at 8 in the morning. His devotions, correspondence, and

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bath, till half-past 10. He takes breakfast at half-past 10, enjoys private study till 1. From 1 till 5 enters on engagements, which may be arranged by friends. At 5 he dines, and from 6 to 10 he is open to engagements.

"Mr. Sen and his cousin Mr. Prosonno are vegetarians, and so abstain from all animal food and eggs, and all alcoholic drinks as well. Their drink is water or lemonade, they also enjoy warm milk. For breakfast, the following may be prepared: boiled rice and sliced potatoes fried in butter; also vegetable or peasoup. Dinner the same as breakfast, with fruit, puddings and sweets; no eggs in the pastry. In all cases they desire to be entertained together."

With incessant labour, lecturing, preaching, talking, his sensitive nervous system strained continually to its utmost tension, eating boiled rice and sweets, drinking lemonade, how long could he hold out against the merciless exactions of English society? So in the hot month of June, while travelling in Lancashire, he was taken suddenly and severely ill. Mr. and Mrs. Brooke Herford, of Manchester, now of Boston, who had him then as their guest, were exceedingly concerned about his case. He suffered from acute vertigo, accompanied by fever and retching. The family in Calcutta, seeing a report of his illness in the papers, was in a perfect agony of anxiety. Expensive telegrams were sent to which the good Mr Spears wired an immediate reply. "No fear. Perfectly cured. Resumed work." His English friends say Keshub was too much alarmed at his own illness; probably the fate of Ram Mohun Roy came to his remembrance. His engagements had to be postponed for a while, as the doctor peremptorily ordered rest, light work, and plenty of recreation. He removed to Liverpool, where the late Mr. Dawburn and his family, living in a suburban retreat, accommodated him most comfortably, and took the most affectionate care of his health. With the exception of this interval of illness which, with the period of convalescence, extended to about three weeks, Keshub kept tolerably good health in England, and did no end of useful work. The very first place he visited in his provincial tour was Bristol, the home of Miss Mary Carpenter, whose intimate acquaintance he had made two years ago in India. Miss Carpenter had materially helped his operations in London with the great influence she possessed with the Unitarian leaders, as well as with such eminent men as the late Earl of Shaftesbury, and others. But as soon as Keshub's London engagements were over, she insisted upon a visit to Bristol, and received him in the celebrated Red Lodge House, the chief peculiarity of which, as it struck Keshub, was that "the servants joined the inmates of the family in the daily Divine service." Miss Carpenter took in hand her oriental

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guest most completely, and, with her well-known discipline, gave him incessant directions about the usages and etiquette of English society. Her restless spirit of reform criticised his dress, his diet, even the manner of combing his hair ; in fact she hemmed him in with so many warnings, injunctions, and engagements, that the mild Hindu reformer felt inconveniently straitened, he had now and then to protest. We are afraid Miss Carpenter at times found Keshub an intractable pupil, and in the end something like a coolness sprang up between them, but Keshub bravely pulled through the crisis at Red Lodge House. If the experiences at Bristol were somewhat checkered, they had their bright side also. In honour of Keshub's visit, Miss Carpenter founded the National Indian Association, the proceedings of which are successfully carried on in London down to the present day by her successor Miss Manning. It will be remembered that Bristol was the last resting place of Raja Ram Mohun Roy, and enshrines his ashes at Lewin's Mead Cemetery. Keshub made a solemn pilgrimage to the grave, where he knelt down, and offered a fervent prayer thus :—

"I especially offer prayer for the soul of that illustrious man who came from my country, and whose remains lie here. Nourish his soul and heart with strength, and purity, and piety, that he may, O Lord, find the blessings of communion with Thee through everlasting ages. And have mercy, my Father, upon all my brothers and sisters gathered in this chapel this morning; sanctify their hearts, purify their resolutions and aspirations, and, O our living God, gather us together in Thy holy family, that we may learn to worship Thee in spirit and in truth as our common Father, in time and eternity. Amen."

Professor F. W. Newman, his early correspondent and old friend, to whom he at all times owed much encouragement and edification, came to see him from Weston-super-Mere in the neighbourhood. Mr. Newman was celebrated for his peculiar views and habits. He was an anti-vaccinationist, anti-meat-eater, and anti-Christian in those days. They exchanged many vegetarian sympathies, and theistic ideas, and had some controversies also. The late excellent Misses Winkworth extended to him their refined hospitality, and invited him to their house at Clifton. Altogether Keshub's visit to Bristol was profitable. Once in the provinces, Keshub longed to pay a visit to Stratford-on-Avon. He had a constitutional admiration for Shakespere, and could never bear the idea of leaving England without a pilgrimage to the birthplace of the immortal poet. How often do we remember to have heard him quoting the adage. "Possessed of the Bible and Shakespere, a man is above the world."

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From his childhood upwards, he was always playing, or reading, or quoting Shakespere. There was much of the Hamlet ideal in his cast of mind, and Herr Bandmann, the famous Shakesperian player said, "he had the model Othello make-up." He always felt a rapture in dwelling upon the weired character of Lady Macbeth, he recited the wild words of the three Witches in awe-inspiring accents; Desdemona, Juliet, and Portia fascinated his chaste nature. Now came the opportunity of walking in the very scenes where the author of so much beauty, romance, wisdom, vigour, lived, laboured, meditated, and died. From Bristol passing hurriedly through Bath, he proceeded to Stratford, and saw every one of the sights which are the delight of so many millions of pilgrims. In the quaint little chapel on the banks of winding leafy Avon, he knelt in reverence before the grave of William Shakespere, the prophet of true poetry; in the quaint dingy little cottage he saw the garret in which the immortal bard was born, the rough deal table on which he carved his name, and on which perhaps he composed his Hamlet. The retired, antique, verdant look of Stratford pleased him immensely, and thence he went on his onward journey to other great cities of England.

An unpleasant incident happened to him about this time. Some emissary deputed by a number of narrow-minded Christian Missionaries in Calcutta, circulated a leaflet in which an attempt was made to discredit Keshub before the English public with the statement that while he preached monotheism in foreign countries, he allowed idolatry to be practised in his own home. The fact of the case was that Keshub up to that time was one of the members of a large jointfamily, many of whom were believers of the orthodox Hindu polytheism, and Keshub had as little right to interfere with their forms of worship as they had with his. He had his Brahmo Somaj service, and they had their idolatrous offerings, in different parts of the same large family house. An inexperienced foreigner going into the house would be struck with the incongruity of the two observances, and feel inclined to charge the reformer with sanctioning idolatry. The calumny got up in the heat of the controversy in regard to the conversion into Christianity of a Hindu girl, said to be a distant relative of Keshub, was soon contradicted, and he travelled about in England as triumphantly as before.

He recites a somewhat similar persecution during his stay in London:—

"I received a letter the other day from a lady, Mrs. Bevan, a perfect stranger to me, saying she had something very important to com-

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municate to me, and that she would be glad to see me at lunch some day. With great curiosity I drive down to see her. But how bitter and sad is my disappointment when I find that after giving me a somewhat cold reception she begins to preach, and catechises me as to what my difficulties are in accepting Christ in the orthodox way. It shows her warm and firm faith indeed, but to me it is anything but agreeable after the trouble and expense incurred in coming all this distance. At last she feels she is not a preacher enough, and recommends me to see her *guru*, who, I believe, is a dissenting minister."

But if some of his Christian friends were inconsiderate, others were kind. A number of the Trinitarian clergy of Nottingham presented him a most cordial address in which, after complimenting him on his advanced views they devoutly prayed for his "perception of the whole truth of Christianity." Keshub, in a carefully worded reply, pointed out the contending dogmas of Christian sects, and candidly said, "however unwillingly I might be to accept these dogmas, I beg to assure you that I am anxious to imbibe the blessed spirit of truly Christian life, Christ-like meekness, resignation, charity, and self-sacrifice. And so far as these may be found in the lives of men and women in this country, I shall humbly and thankfully accept them for my own and my country's use."

A somewhat hurried tour was made through the North of England and Scotland in August. He received splendid ovations in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and at Leeds leading Unitarian gentlemen established a branch of the National Indian Association which, some months before, Miss Mary Carpenter had founded at Bristol in honor of Keshub's visit to that city. Keshub's sojourn in England was now drawing to a close. One ardent wish he had in his mind. The Prime Minister of England Mr. Gladstone had already invited him to breakfast, he now desired to have the honour of paying his homage to Her Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress Victoria. It was a great honour, but the Hindu reformer's reputation had now so thoroughly pervaded English society, that Her Majesty must have heard of him. Lord Lawrence had great influence at the English court, and the Duke of Argyle, who was Secretary of State for India at the time, has ever been known as the patron of virtue and worth. Miss Collet gives a graphic account of Keshub's presentation to the Queen. The Duke of Argyle, the Queen's brother-in-law, wrote to Keshub making the appointment thus:—" Dear Mr. Sen,—Col. Ponsonby, the Queen's Private Secretary, has written to me that if you go down to Osborne on Saturday, the 13th, Her Majesty will see you. I recommend you to take the 8-10 A.M. train from Waterloo Bridge to Southampton. There

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is a steamer in connection with the train, and you are landed at Cowes, whence you can take a fly to Osborne." On the appointed day Mr. Sen accompanied by an English friend, proceeded to Osborne. On reaching the royal residence, he was very kindly received by Colonel Ponsonby, the Queen's Private Secretary, with whom he had a pleasant conversation on several subjects, mostly relating to India, and particularly on the Brahmo Marriage Bill, in which Colonel Ponsonby seemed to take much interest. Mr. Sen was then taken round the corridor to see the drawing-room, and other elegant apartments, and a vegetarian luncheon was kindly provided for him. At the appointed hour he was taken to the drawing-room in which he was to see the Queen, where Her Majesty and the Princess Louise soon appeared. Her Majesty expressed much satisfaction at the progress of female education in India and the improvements made in several respects by her Indian subjects in consequence of English education. Both the Queen and the Princess were glad to hear that India was a great field for philanthrophic labours, and that Mr. Sen had requested many of his lady friends in England to go thither to undertake the work of female education. Mr. Sen had brought with him two likenesses of his wife, one of them being a large and delicately painted photograph, showing the full Hindu dress. These portraits were graciously accepted by the Queen and the Princess; and Prince Leopold sent to request Mr. Sen's autograph. On the 23rd August, Colonel Ponsonby wrote to Mr. Sen from Windsor; saying:—"I can assure you that the Queen was much pleased with her conversation with you, and Princess Louise took much interest in the subject you spoke about." A few days afterwards the Queen and Princess Louise honoured Mr. Sen by expressing their desire to have his photograph. Their kind wish was conveyed to Mr. Sen in a letter from Major-General Sir T. M. Biddulph, in which he said:—"He has been desired to intimate to him (Mr. Sen) that it would be gratifying to the Queen and to Princess Louise to possess photographs of him if he would not object to send some." Before Mr. Sen left England, the Queen further showed her kindness by presenting him with a large engraving of herself, and with her two books (the "Early Years of the Prince Consort" and the "Highland Journal"), the value of which was enhanced by the following inscription in each volume, in her own handwriting: "To Keshub Chandra Sen, from Victoria Re. Sept, 1870."

On the 12th September, a farewell meeting was convened at the Hanover Square Rooms which had already been the scene

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of an enthusiastic welcome to Keshub in April. No less than eleven denominations were represented on the occasion. Speeches were as cordial as before, and Keshub's goodbye was deeply affecting. Mr. Spears gave a brief summary of Keshub's proceedings in England during his six months' sojourn thus:—

"It may be interesting to the present meeting and the friends of Mr. Sen to have before them the catholicity of the engagements and duties of a public character in which he has been engaged since the welcome meeting in these rooms. He has visited fourteen of the chief towns of England and Scotland, and lectured or conducted religious services, occupying the pulpits of Baptist, Congregational, and Unitarian chapels. He has had invitations from upwards of forty towns which he has not been able to visit. He has addressed meetings promotive of Peace, Temperance, Reformatories, Ragged Schools, and General Education. He has also spoken to gatherings of children at different places, and at medical, literary, and philosophical institutions. He has addressed the students at the Borough-Road British and Foreign School, and spoken at several social meetings. The Babu has addressed several meetings at the Tabernacle, the East Indian Association Rooms, and other places, on the Duties of England to India, and on Zenana or Female Education. He has also preached to large congregations of the poor in the East of London. Mr. Sen has thus had an opportunity of speaking at upwards of seventy different public meetings since his arrival in England to upwards of forty thousand people; and has attended a large number of meetings of a less public character than those now mentioned, at which he has also taken some part."

The *Spectator* of the time summarised the proceedings of the meeting in these words:—

"Our Eastern visitor, Keshub Chunder Sen, took leave of his English friends last Monday, at a crowded gathering in the Hanover Square Rooms, previous to his return to India. After a few speeches from representatives of various religious denominations (among which Professor Plumptre's remarks on the Brahmo movement, and the Rev. H. Ierson's on English sects, were notably good), Mr. Sen gave his impressions of England. He painted our social peculiarities and follies with a light, humorous touch, spoke of our great social evils with earnest regret, and expressed his admiration of 'the three great blessings of England,' her charities, her homes, and her public opinion. On these he dwelt eloquently, and urged his hearers to do all in their power to promote the growth of similar blessings in India, where they are so much needed. Lastly, he spoke of English religion, and especially of Christianity, giving utterance to a series of thoughts and conceptions which showed the intense spirituality of his nature and the fulness and depth of his Theism, and indicated more transcendental power than anything he has said here before. He ended by thanking England for his hospitable reception, saying, 'that from Her Majesty to the poorest peasant,' all had been kind to him. With honest simplicity, he put aside the public praise, 'which he did not deserve,' and took only the affection of which he could with difficulty speak unmoved."

Keshub's last words to the meeting were, it seemed, wrung

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out of his soul, so great was the kindness and affection universally shown to him.

"My brethren, the time has come for me to say the last word of farewell. From England I go away, but my heart will always be with you, and England will always be in my heart. Farewell, dear England; 'with all thy faults I love thee still.' Farewell, country of Shakespeare and of Newton, land of liberty and charity. Farewell, temporary home, where I realised, and tasted, and enjoyed the sweetness of brotherly and sisterly love? Farewell, my Father's Western house! Farewell, my beloved brothers and sisters."

Keshub left London for Southampton on the 17th September. A meeting had been arranged for him there, and he spoke a few parting words. He embarked on the same day in the P. and O. Company's Steamer *Australia*, and reached Bombay on the 15th October. A deputation from the *Prarthana Somaj* (the local name for *Brahmo Somaj*) waited upon him, and invited him to give an address on his English visit. He addressed a large and enthusiastic meeting in the Framji Cowasji Hall on the next day, and in his discourse dwelt very much upon the same topics as in his farewell address in London. On the 20th October at about midday, the Howrah Station was crowded by an immense concourse of Keshub's friends who had come to receive him. As the train steamed in, deafening cheers shook the great platform. The welcome home was most touching and enthusiastic. The house at Colutolah was the scene of continued festivities by day, and brilliant illuminations by night. Keshub never tired of reciting his European experiences. He unpacked the numerous presents he had received, and the numerous purchases he had made. He reverently exhibited the gifts of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress and the Royal Family. Crowds of visitors called to see him. The whole household at Colutola, specially his fond sorrowing mother, and his warm-hearted wife gloried to get him back. We gave him, on behalf of the congregation, an affectionate reception at the Belgharia Garden. He on his part gave a warm recognition of the services rendered to his family by the faithful, devoted Kanty Chunder Mitter* in whose hands he had confidently entrusted their charge. The present writer humbly made over to him the ministerial seal and casket. And when Keshub once more sat on the pulpit of the *Brahma Mandir* on the Sunday following, his royal figure, and noble mien, improved, dignified, flushed with health and success, drew the

*Brahmo Missionary (the *Kakababu* of the Church of the New Dispensation).

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honour and admiration of large crowds who had gathered to hear him.

The record of Keshub's English visit could not be closed without alluding to the valuable friendships he formed in the course of it. Chief among these was his intimacy with Miss S. D. Collet. This lady, with her extraordinary powers, strange physical incapacities, and unique history, followed the path of Keshub's movements in England with a devoted interest which the loyalty of his most faithful disciples could not excel. For eight long years Keshub's indefatigable friend and unfailing helper, her cordial relations with him ended with the Cooch-Behar marriage. Thenceforth her sympathies suffered the violent reaction which put her so far out of understanding with Keshub's career, that almost every representation she made of his motives and actions afterwards bore the evident bias of her changed feelings. Other friendships lasted far better. Two amongst these deserve a special mention; Professor Max Müller, and the late Dean Stanley were Keshub's lifelong friends. The Professor in his Biographical Essays says "Stanley had been to the end a staunch friend of Keshub Chunder Sen. As was usual with him, the attacks on the Indian Reformer had only served to strengthen Stanley's sympathy for him, and he had several times asked me whether and how he could help him." As for Max Müller himself, his services to India are not to be measured only by the valuable literary tribute he has repeatedly paid to Hindu philosophy and faith, but the personal affection and solicitude he has shown for every Hindu, for every oriental he has met, are characteristic of the man. The Biographical Essays are full of correspondence which shows the relations of fraternal cordiality and intense esteem in which he held Keshub. He has made the best and bravest defences of Keshub's career, and his was the most eloquent testimony of all, borne by so many, of the worth and character of the departed reformer. The gracious reception given to Keshub by the Queen, and the kind interest which Her Majesty ever afterwards showed in his welfare, had a most profound moral effect upon his mind. His loyalty had the colour of romance in it, it became a part of his religion. The books and pictures which Her Majesty presented he treasured up, and regarded almost with a superstitious honour. He beheld the hand of God in the sceptre swayed by the Empress of India. It is interesting to think what phase the revolutionary political activities of Young India would have taken if Keshub Chunder Sen had lent them the weight of his influence and sympathy.

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But though, as his lectures in England and India show, he was an uncompromising champion of justice and equality, yet he was equally uncompromising in maintaining the highest standards of loyalty to the Imperial throne. The hospitality and friendship extended to him in England "from the poorest peasant to Her Majesty the Queen," made him regard England and India as the two mansions of the Great Father's house, one "His Eastern Home," and the other, "His Western Home."

The most original impression which Keshub produced amongst the thoughtful in England was the possible formation of an Asiatic Christianity. The spirituality, imaginativeness, faith, enthusiasm, and asceticism of the East could never be bound within the cold creeds and catechisms of Europe. When they witnessed the profusion of this warm Asiatic impulse in Keshub's utterances and character, found him to be the leader of a young, growing, abounding church, found besides the genuineness and depth of his attachment to the Messianic ideal of Jesus, they felt, more perhaps than they cared to express, that the future of the world's religion lay in the East, and not in the West. It was James Martineau only, who, at Keshub's reception, found the courage to say, "While quick to absorb and appropriate all modern science, the Indian genius would do so without sacrificing at the same time the divine interpretation of the universe. With subtler thought and gentler affections, it would go behind the phenomena that stop our way, and bring back the flood of the divine light in the world." In a short letter written to the late Revd. W. H. Channing on the eve of his departure from England, Sept. 16th, Keshub speaks his mind on this subject thus:—"The East and West will unite—such is God's will. The signs of the times greatly encourage me, and my visit in this country has clearly convinced me that it is possible to make the world our home, and to love all as brothers and sisters. God's Spirit is working everywhere. Blessed is he who sees the work, and realises the Divine Spirit."

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CHAPTER VIII.

ESTABLISHMENT AND INNOVATIONS.

Keshub as a Reformer, 1871-1875.

Keshub's English visit opened the latent powers of his inexhaustible mind. From the number of his public appearances, on every occasion of which he had to speak, very often at great length and generally on the same subjects, it was to be feared that by the time he thought of returning home to India, he would be thoroughly used up. Far from that being the case, the last oration he made at the farewell soirée in London, indicated, observed the *Spectator*, "a more transcendental power than anything he said before." But the mental unfolding related not merely to principles and sentiments but to strong positive philanthrophic activities. It has been already said that an endless, almost a superhuman force formed the principal characteristic of Keshub's genius. It always found vent in new plans, new reforms, new creations. When stirred by fresh experiences, such as he acquired in England, that force showed a wonderful fertility. The first thing which Keshub did after his return to Calcutta was the establishment of the Indian Reform Association in November 1870, for "the social and moral reformation of the Natives of India." It had five sections, namely, Cheap Literature, Charity, Female Improvement, Education, and Temperance. The influence of such newspapers as the *Times* and the *Echo* struck him with the irresistible power of English public opinion in exposing wrong, encouraging right, and educating the common people. The comparative inexpensiveness of such an agency, Keshub having a printing press of his own, suggested and facilitated its adoption among a poor nation like the Hindus of Bengal. And with the ready instinct of a true reformer, he started the *Sulava Samachar** (cheap news) in November 1870. It was a weekly *pice* paper under the management of the new association, the first enterprise of its kind in India, and made a great sensation, meeting with an unexpected success. Three to four thousand copies were weekly sold, an unpre-

*"সুলভ সমাচার।"

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cedented newspaper sale at that time in the country, and those classes who had never handled a newspaper before, began eagerly to read and pay for the *Sulava Samachar*. Keshub's friends, heedless of their social position, began to walk from street to street, hawking the paper, oftentimes without food or protection against the weather. Chief amongst these was Wooma Nath Gupta,* one of the most faithful and devoted of Keshub's disciples, who in every undertaking that entailed fatigue and privation, was the first to offer his enthusiastic services. The novelty and success of this newspaper stimulated repeated imitations, till at the present moment, cheap journalism has become a widespread institution, and created a public opinion which the Government itself is obliged to respect. Of this kind of vernacular journalism in Bengal then, daily growing in influence and importance (and in this matter Bengal has set the example to all other Indian provinces), Keshub Chunder Sen was the pioneer. His zeal and reform, however, did not stop here. The intelligence and refinement of the women of England had delighted him, and he established the Normal School for Native Ladies under the Female Improvement Section of the Indian Reform Association in 1871. This reform was equally successful. Nearly fifty ladies, all from high class Hindu families, regularly attended the school every day, giving and receiving instruction in the most advanced branches of knowledge. Never before had women from the Zenana mustered so strong to receive the light of Western education. The Government was so well satisfied with the progress of their studies, that an annual grant of Rs. 2,000 was sanctioned. Pupil teachers were regularly trained both in the English and vernacular languages, and some of the young ladies attained a high order of proficiency. At the annual exhibitions for prize-giving, the Viceroy and the ladies of the Viceregal court were repeatedly present to encourage their Hindu sisters. Altogether, female improvement took a new start and made great strides forward. Keshub had enthusiastically worked in connection with the Temperance Societies in England, and he fully meant to continue these activities at home, because, intemperance was making a sad havoc among the inhabitants of Bengal. Under the Temperance Section of his Reform Association, he and his friends laboured for successive years, firstly in the direction of producing a wholesome horror in the mind of the

*One of the Apostles of the Church of the New Dispensation.

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rising generation against drinking, and secondly in the direction of reforming the excise administration of the country by exposing the evils of Government liquor policy through the publication of facts and figures. Lectures were also delivered, tracts were written, and a monthly temperance journal was started.* A numerous Band of Hope was organised for the young. Keshub also organised a department of charity on enlightened and economic principles. A great amount of relief was administered by this agency both in the shape of almsgiving, and the distribution of medicine in large tracts of the country stricken by epidemic diseases. An Industrial School was at the same time established, giving instruction to large numbers in branches of technical knowledge. The moral influences, the healthy convictions, and the public impression caused by Keshub's labours in the cause of Temperance induced the Government of India to order special inquiries into the working of its liquor policy. Keshub, as President of the Indian Reform Association, issued a circular inviting the opinions of all public men, both Native and European in 1872. Most valuable and varied suggestions came, which were embodied in the form of a memorial to Government. This agitation encouraged other bodies to send similar memorials. The Board of Revenue, in the interests of Government finance, had to make a formal criticism of all these memorials, and denied the occasion or possibility of reform. In spite of all this, however, Lord Northbrook recorded an emphatic decision "that the number of liquor shops should be reduced to the utmost degree compatible with the requirements of the neighbourhood." And in the revision of the Bengal excise system, consequent on these discussions, as embodied in Act II of 1876, "several steps in advance were taken," to quote from the language of the official report. With a programme of such extensive and important reforms, with an influence and popularity he had never possessed before, with a robust and renewed health, favoured alike by Government and the people, Keshub entered into a fresh career. The Native Ladies' Normal School, to which allusion has been made, was founded in February 1871. And it was supplemented by another institution called *Bama Hitaisini Sava* (society for the benefit of women), in connection with which ladies read papers, and carried on discussions which were presided over by Keshub himself. These classes and meetings were not open to the

*বিষবৈরী (*Bisha Bairi*).

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public, they were held in the retirement of the *zenana*, the restrictions of which Keshub relaxed very gradually. Miss Collet, in one of her Year Books, quoted a passage from the annual report of this Society. "The lively manner in which the discussions were conducted often evinced a great amount of earnestness and interest. The arguments used on such occasions were subsequently embodied in the shape of essays by some of the members, and published in the *Bamabodhini Patrika.*" This was for a long time the only ladies' journal in the Brahmo Somaj, being founded nine years previous, about 1862, by a band of young men, chief among whom was Babu Umesh Chander Dutt,* a distinguished member of the *Sadharan Brahmo Somaj*, still the Editor of that journal. The steadiness and perseverance with which this gentleman, a verteran in the cause of female education, has laboured in this department of the work of the Brahmo Somaj, deserves the highest praise. Miss Radharani Lahiri† was the Secretary of the *Bama Hitaishini Sava* as long as the Society was alive. Her example and acquirements, the devoted self-sacrifice with which she has given the best years of her life to the improvement of her sex, have won the admiration of the whole Brahmo community. This gentleman and lady were of great service to Keshub's cause at this time. These educational reforms, however, spread out in other directions as well. The Industrial School and working men's classes, about the establishment of which we have already spoken, filled the Brahmo Somaj offices with a new kind of activity and turmoil. The sawing, chopping, hammering went on with undiminished vigor, month after month ; boxes, chairs, and cabinets sprang into existence. Clerks from Government offices, graduates from the neighbouring colleges, Brahmo missionaries, headed by Keshub himself, took to these occupations with workmanlike avidity; while professional bookbinders, tinkers, and carpenters plodded at literary industry, reading primers and working sums at arithmetic under the feeble light of oil-lamps long after nightfall. With what effect Keshub learnt these handicrafts was seen during his last illness at Simla, when being medically ordered to take to light work, he produced his celebrated treatise on *Yoga* on the one hand, and on the other, busied himself in turning out little pieces of furniture, the workmanship of which made some one exclaim that "he could not have done better if he had given

*Principal, City College, Calcutta.
†Teacher, Bethune School, Calcutta.

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his whole life to carpentry alone." Keshub was a mechanic and artist by nature. He had an inborn propensity for fixing furnitures, hanging pictures, screening cabinets, raising structures, and managing machinery. He devoted hours and days to such occupations with surprising seriousness. His stage-managing gifts, first evidenced at the youthful dramas, he retained to the last. At one time, when he was a very young man, he drew and painted all sorts of pictures with great persistency. He had a scrupulously neat handwriting, the result of much careful practice. Whatever he planned, or executed, was characterised by a taste and an exquisiteness peculiarly his own. He was a lover of beauty, both internal and external, and he knew, besides, the art of making the beautiful useful.

The most important incident of 1871, however, was the violent agitation about the Brahmo Marriage Bill. The measure, as the reader will remember, was introduced into the Governor-General's Council at Simla in September 1868, by Sir Henry Maine, the Law Member of the Government of India, when Keshub was kindly invited to that hill sanitarium by Lord John Lawrence. Sir H. S. Maine made elaborate speeches, explaining the necessity of the measure, chiefly on the ground that "it was not the policy of the Queen's Government to refuse the power of marriage to any of Her Majesty's subjects, and that he doubted even whether orthodox Hindus would wish to deny to the Brahmos a privilege fully enjoyed by *Sonthals* and *Gonds*." But, said he, as the creed of the Brahmos lacked stability (he had ascertained this by frequent conversations with Mr. Sen, their leader), and "it would be difficult for legal purposes to define a Brahmo, and if no definition were given, there might shortly be petitions for relief by persons who were in the same legal position as the present applicants, but who declared that they could not conscientiously call themselves Brahmos, hence the Bill had been drawn with some degree of generality. . . . . It would be in substance a Civil Marriage Bill, having, however, the peculiarity, that the persons availing themselves of the new power must not be Christians (to whom a special system of marriage registration applied), and must expressly object to be married with the rites of any one of the recognised Native religions. With religious ceremonial it would not be concerned. The Brahmos could add to the requirements of the law whatever ritual they preferred, and the result would be that, as in several European countries, there could be first a civil, and

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afterwards a religious marriage." Sir H. S. Maine pointed out that previous legislation on the subject had relieved all persons, excluded from the communion of any religion, or renouncing any religion, or put out of caste, from the forfeiture of the rights of property and inheritance, but by an oversight had omitted to confer on them the right of contracting marriages, not in accordance to orthodox usages, but their own convictions. With the view of supplying this omission in the case of all modern Indian religious communities, whose marriages were invalided by the same reasons that made Brahmo marriages invalid, Sir Henry Maine proposed a general Civil Marriage Act that would include all recent religious sects in India, and all those who objected to marry according to prescribed rites. Now, the entire orthodox community took serious alarm at this. They raised a mighty uproar from all sides. They complained that such a law would cause the utter disruption of the ancient social organisation in the land by giving every heretic the right of marrying whomsoever and howsoever he chose, and still retaining his position and its advantages in Hindu society. The opposition was so serious that the Select Committee to which the Marriage Bill had been referred in 1868, after obtaining the opinions of the local authorities in different Provincial Governments on the subject, came to the following conclusion in 1871:—"It is the unanimous opinion of the Local Governments that the Bill as introduced should not be passed. They all, on the other hand, agree that the Bill would be unobjectionable if confined to the Brahmo Somaj, for whose benefit it was originally designed. We have, accordingly, narrowed its operation to the members of the sect. . . . We recommend that the Bill thus altered be passed."

In the meantime Sir Henry Maine, the framer of the Bill in its original shape, had left India, and his successor Sir James Stephen took up the measure in its modified form. Keshub felt he was within measurable distance of seeing the law passed. But an unforeseen difficulty arose. During the last three years it was the Hindus who opposed the Brahmos, but when the measure was narrowed down to the limits of the Brahmo Somaj, it was the Brahmos who opposed the Brahmos. Hence the opposition became exceedingly and intensely personal. The *Adi Brahmo Somaj* sent its representatives to wait in deputation upon Sir Stephen expressing concern and alarm at the new form of the Bill, and requesting further delay. The deputation was followed up by a memorial

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in which reasons were specifically set forth why the Bill, as a Brahmo Marriage Bill, should not be passed. The chief reason urged was that the Brahmo Somaj was not outside the pale of the Hindu communion, and its marriages, as hitherto celebrated, were both in ceremony and in spirit, as valid as any Hindu marriage could be. Any new law passed to give sanction to the present marriage rites of the Brahmos, would, in the first place, assume that all previous marriages in the Brahmo Somaj were illegal, and in the second place, determine the status of the Brahmo Somaj as distinct from and outside of the limits of Hindu society. The English legal authorities had already pronounced Brahmo marriages to be unfit for the sanction of Hindu law, it remained now to be decided whether the leaders of orthodox Hindu society also judged them in the same light. And a great agitation was got up to receive the decision of the learned *Pandits* of Calcutta, Benares, and Nuddea on the subject. An outburst of strong language, and not a little personal animadversion, was levelled against Keshub, and his friends actively retorted. Letters were addressed by Keshub to the leading authorities of Hindu society, and the rituals both of the *Adi Somaj* and the *Brahmo Somaj of India* were submitted to their judgment. They almost unanimously declared that both the rituals were equally un-Hindu and illegal according to orthodox usages. This settled the matter so far. But there was a real grievance which the *Adi Somaj* pleaded. They said the form of Civil Marriage prescribed by the new law was revolting to their religious instincts, they could not conscientiously adopt the statutory form of registration before an official, and as they believed their marriage rites to be perfectly legal, it was needless oppression to compel them to appear before Marriage Registrars who might not be members of the Brahmo Somaj at all. The formal renunciation of the Hindu religion required by the statutory declaration, was also against their conviction and conscience, they believed the Brahmo religion was in essence Hindu religion. And they complained that the preamble of the Bill was so ambiguous that it would include in its operations, not only the *Brahmo Somaj of India,* on whose behalf the Bill was framed, but the *Adi Somaj* as well, thus invalidating the marriage rites of the latter, which were sound enough in their own eyes. This just contention was at once recognised by Keshub, and by his recommendation one of the sections of the Act provided that "Nothing in this Act contained shall affect the validity of any marriage not solemnised under its

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provisions; nor shall this Act be deemed directly or indirectly to affect the validity of any mode of contracting marriage; but if the validity of any such mode shall hereafter come into question before any court, such question shall be decided as if this Act had not been passed." The name of the Act therefore, in consideration of the difficulties suggested, was changed from "Brahmo Marriage Act," to "Native Marriage Act," and it was passed after much discussion on the 19th March, 1872. Keshub exulted, and was very grateful to Government for passing this measure, which gave legislative sanction to a variety of reforms which were very near to his heart. Bigamy and polygamy were made impossible in the the Brahmo Somaj. Infant marriages were abolished. The husband was bound to complete the age of 18 years, and the wife, the age of 14 years. Idolatory was expunged. The two former evils were made penal by the new marriage law. Intermarriages were formally recognised by the legislature, and widow marriages were sanctioned as a matter of course. True, the form of civil registration was repugnant to the feelings of the religious Hindu, but it ought to be rememberd that the men and women who married according to Brahmo rites had to a large extent set aside the restrictions of the *zenana,* and again that almost all the Registrars appointed under the Act at that time were Brahmos. There was only one serious disadvantage, and that was the formal declaration on the part of the marrying parties that they "did not profess the Hindu, Mahomedan, Christian, Parsee, Budhist, Sikh, or Jaina religion." In the memorial which was drawn up at the instance of Keshub by the *Brahmo Somaj of India,* and submitted to Government in answer to that from the *Adi Somaj,* it was distinctly stated "that the term 'Hindu' does not include the Brahmos, who deny the authority of the *Vedas,* are opposed to every form of *Brahminical* religion, and being eclectics admit proselytes from Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians, and other religious sects." Such a statement, no doubt, made it easier for Sir Stephen to secure the enactment of the measure, but this undoubtedly diminished its popularity. Hindus and all other opponents of the law found it impossible to continue their hostility to it, when those who sought its protection voluntarily cast themselves out of the pale of Hindu, as well as of every other orthodox communion. But, on the other hand, a large number of Indian Theists, both in Bengal and other presidencies, felt that they could not conscientiously abjure the all-inclusive Hindu name. Keshub was

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placed in the dilemma of choosing between two painful alternatives; either to disown the Hindu name, or to have no marriage law at all. He preferred to abide by the disadvantage of the former. He always felt he was a Hindu by nationality, and in the old Aryan spirit. His personal habits in their abstemious simplicity were those of the orthodox Hindu. He despised the outlandish fashions of the day. But the name Hindu came in later times to mean the followers of surrounding idolatries and *Brahminical* superstitions which he unhesitatingly reprobated. He meant to cover the disadvantage of renouncing the name by an abundance of the true Hindu spirit and life. And both before and after this time, specially since the announcement of the New Dispensation, he made the most heroic efforts to make his movement intensely Hindu in form as well as in essence. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the protest against the Hindu name, which the new marriage law made indispensable, will continue to be a serious drawback towards its universal acceptance in India.

Parallel to the agitation of procuring the decision of Hindu *Pandits*, Keshub set on foot another most important agitation. It was on the subject of ascertaining the proper marriageable age of Hindu girls. The custom of early marriage he warmly condemned. As President of the Indian Reform Association, he addressed in April 1871 a circular letter to the most eminent medical authorities in India wishing to have their opinion on the question. Keshub in a speech at the Town Hall thus summarized their views:—

"The medical authorities in Calcutta unanimously declare that sixteen is the minimum marriageable age of girls in this country. Dr. Charles* makes a valuable suggestion; he holds that fourteen, being the commencement of adolescence, may for the present be regarded as the minimum age at which native girls may be allowed to marry and may serve as a starting point for reform in this direction. In conformity with his suggestion and the opinions given by the other referees, we have come to the conclusion that, for the present at least, it would be expedient to follow the provision in the Bill which makes fourteen the minimum marriageable age of girls in this country, leaving it in the hands of time to develop this reform slowly and gradually into maturity and fulness."

Keshub justly considered the passing of the Marriage Bill,

*Professor, Medical College, Calcutta.

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the greatest triumph of his career as a reformer. But he was not unmindful of his spiritual functions amidst the excitement of that triumph. Throughout the year 1871, he systematically inculcated and insisted upon the supreme importance of unity and love among advanced Brahmos. He put before them the great ideal of a household of God. The worshippers in the *Brahma Mandir,* and the members of the *Brahmo Somaj of India,* he taught, were a great family of brethren and sisters, they ought to live as such. He taught the doctrine of an apostolic brotherhood and sisterhood, a kind of spiritual commonwealth in which all advantages, both temporal and religious, were to be held without distinction. Unforeseen facilities to develop this ideal into an experiment presented themselves. A number of Brahmo missionaries had, during his absence in England, taken up their residence with their families in the old three-storied house now pulled down at No. 13 Mirzapur Street, whither the "Indian Mirror" Office, and the "Indian Mirror" Press had also been removed. When Keshub returned home, he found these families congregated together, and the house being spacious, other families were soon invited to join. Taking this for his nucleus, Keshub established, in February 1872, the institution known as the *Bharat Asram.** It was a kind of religious boarding house. The wives and children of Brahmos in the mofussil were sent to it for training. About twenty-five families, consisting of men, women, and children thus lived together, having their devotions, studies, and meals together, and showing the noblest dispositions of love and good will towards each other. The Brahmo missionaries and their families formed the centre of them all. One of the great lessons which Keshub professed to have learnt in England was the blessedness of the English home. Always ready to embody in institution every great idea he acquired, and make his Church the sharer of his faith and experience, he founded this new home of the *Bharat Asram* for his fellow believers. He meant it to be a modern apostolic organisation, where the inmates should have a community of all things, and where every worldly relation should be merged in spiritual fellowship. He joined it for a while with his wife and children. Every mischievous Hindu restraint was gradually withdrawn, and every obnoxious foreign fashion was discouraged, a natural and beneficial social intercourse being regulated by sound and strict religious as well, moral teaching. Regularly

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at every morning he conducted the domestic devotions* with a sweetness of spirituality ever to be remembered. Carefully framed rules and enlightened disciplines were laid down for the daily guidance of the men and women. The institution was successively located in splendid houses and gardens. The unwholesome relations of the Hindu *Zenana* life were laid aside, the women joined the men in daily devotions and frequent companionship. The men allowed their manners to be softened by feminine influence, and willingly learnt to honour the other sex. The Native Ladies' Normal School held its sittings in the *Asram*. The *Bama Hitaishini Sava* convened its meetings there. Thus domestic pursuits, systematic education, entertaining conversations, occasional lectures, and scientific experiments alternated with each other in the routine of the *Bharat Asram*.

From the establishment of the *Bharat Asram* began the steady development of the apostolic community which almost to the last day of his life formed Keshub's great ambition. He had laid its foundation in the *Sangat Sava*† in 1860, he had organised it in 1866 in the Mission Office when the Brahmo Somaj of India was established, and now he wanted to perfect it further. He felt he had established the Fatherhood of God. All India, and all the world gave him sympathy for that. He now turned his attention to organise the Brotherhood of Man, on a simple theistic basis. The most touching prayers and precepts, which his religious culture and experience could produce, were delivered. He threw his whole soul into the undertaking. Individual culture and devotions were discouraged for the time. Every hymn that was sung was sung in the name of all the brethren and sisters, old hymns that put forth individual aspirations were altered, much to the damage of the poetry, to suit this communistic spirit. Individuality from this time forward was regarded as a formidable sin. The common meals, common studies, common devotions, common work, the whole system of *Bharat Asram* life was intended to make the brethren and sisters entirely one in mind and spirit. It was very like one of those experiments made in modern America for a primitive religious culture. The Brahmo missionaries threw their whole heart into the matter, and became much more united in heart than they had

*"উপাসনা।" (Divine Service).

†"সঙ্গতসভা।"

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ever been. The Church became more perfect. The five years that the *Bharat Asram* lasted, it was a useful, delightful institution. Its influences have changed and elevated the careers of many Brahmo families. Its memories, its friendships are undying in their sweetness and sacredness to many souls. The lessons of devotional and apostolical life learnt there have influenced the whole subsequent life of some of the inmates. But amidst these congenial elements there was also an undercurrent of discord. Not a few persons who lived in the *Bharat Asram,* Brahmo missionaries as well as others, misbehaved grossly now and then, and had undignified quarrels. There were some lay Brahmos whose differences with the missionaries were also very serious. These have all joined the *Sadharan Somaj* now, but for a number of years before they left, they showed the tendency of separating from Keshub's movement. For various private provocations, some of them spread slanderous reports against the *Bharat Asram*. The calumny, directed personally against Keshub and his most trusted disciples, took such a virulent character and formidable proportions, that in the interests of the Brahmo community he was obliged to prosecute a vernacular paper in which the charges repeatedly appeared. The case went up to the High Court of Calcutta towards the end of 1874. It must be said that the Native opinion of Calcutta was very largely hostile to Keshub, and the consequent unpopularity he had to suffer was very great. He, with his small band of faithful followers, defied a host of enemies. There was no reasonable doubt about the result of the lawsuit, but just as his counsel was arguing the points, Keshub said that even if in that stage of the case the offenders withdrew their statements, and expressed contrition for what they had done, he would stop the proceedings. The defendants had the good sense to accept this offer, and made an apology. The case accordingly was withdrawn. Evil-disposed men did not change their attitude of distrust either towards Keshub or the *Bharat Asram,* but the honour and sanctity of the institution were sufficiently vindicated, and the impartial public felt great respect for the forbearance which the leader of the Brahmo Somaj showed to his enemies at that critical time.*

The foundation of the present Albert College was laid in the Calcutta School for Boys, which was affiliated to the

*For a peep into Keshub's mind during the *Bharat Asram period,* see his *Dainik Prarthana* in Bengali.

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Indian Reform Association in 1872. All his life Keshub had been the champion of general education. Beginning from the Colutolah Evening School when he was himself a boy, he had successively established many a class, and many a school which for want of funds and co-operation he had not been able to keep up. Now, along with the other institutions which sprang out of the Reform Association he had set up, he took the management of this school which was destined to develop its prospects and usefulness into a College placed upon a lasting footing. But this attempt caused him more anxiety and pain than he was prepared for. As soon as the Calcutta School began to do well, and was placed under the able rectorship of Keshub's younger brother Krishna Behary Sen, the person, to whom this institution had originally belonged, and who was retained still as a teacher, though his proprietory rights had ceased, began to be envious of the prosperity of the school, and circulated all manner of reports against Keshub's honesty, with a view to represent the injustice of the dealings by which the school had been taken out of his hands. The scandal caused by this attempt formed a pendant to that caused by the calumnies brought against the *Bharat Asram*. Keshub, always sensitive of his own reputation, as well as of his Church, suffered intensely from these persecutions. But the sufferings were not unrelieved by intervals of great encouagement and success.

In March 1874, Lord Northbrook, accompanied by his daughter, came to visit the Native Ladies' Normal School, which held an exhibition of the works of Hindu women in their honour. Lord Northbrook who was as friendly to Keshub as his predecessors Lord Lawrence and the Earl of Mayo had been before, paid another visit subsequently to Keshub's ancestral home at Colutolah, where he introduced to His Excellency his principal relatives and friends. This was the greatest honour which the Governmnt could confer on any subject, and, in the tension of public feeling against Keshub, it gave rise to a great deal of private jealousy. The history of Keshub's intimate relations with the Government of India, which gave him distinction, not always pleasant in the eyes of his contemporaries and rivals, began with Lord John Lawrence. Never did Keshub attempt, or aspire after such honour. But it came to him unsought, and in a striking manner. We have already referred to the wide-spread admiration excited among the Christian community by his lecture on Jesus Christ, the introduction it gave him to the

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Viceroy in 1867, the subsequent invitation to Simla, and the close intercourse between himself and the Government officials consequent on the affairs of the Brahmo Marriage Bill. The more the great officials saw of him, the more they liked him, and the more they delighted to honour him. He was presented at Government House in the beginning of 1868, thenceforward receiving at the hands of officials every invitation and every attention that the most prominent citizens of Calcutta could expect. He attended these ceremonies like a child, in a state of nervousness and trepidation. Sometimes he had not the outfit necessary, wanting boots, or underclothing, cuffs, or buttons, which were provided by his friends at the last moment. He stood shyly behind all the assembly that met on such occasions, and the officials had to depute their secretaries and subordinates to hunt him out of the crowd that they might confer with him. But he was elected to stand on all the great committees publicly appointed, and his name was almost invariably seen in every list of eminent public characters. Lord Lawrence strongly recommended him to Lord Mayo, Lord Mayo to the other members of Government. Added to all this was the brilliance of his English visit, and presentation before the Queen. Thus, unsought Keshub acquired a public distinction which often caused him considerable fear and distress. Yet he was exceedingly thankful in his heart for the honours thus thrust upon him, and used them to the utmost advantage of his spiritual improvement, and the influence of his Church. In the company of the humble and poor, which he always and earnestly sought, he realised the strange contrasts of human life, and found that reconciliation of extremes which was the deep enjoyment of his life. When he was among the rich and great, his bearing was so dignified and natural, that men wondered how he could find pleasure in the company of the poor and uneducated men who generally surrounded him. And when he was walking barefooted with the vulgarest crowds of the *bazars,* men wondered what he could want in the brilliant drawing-rooms of the Viceroys and the Maharajahs.

From what has been said of the *Bharat Asram* Libel case and various other calumnies spread about this time, it will be abundantly clear that in the very bosom of the community of which Keshub was the recognised leader, there was slowly springing up a nucleus of men who differed very deeply from him in view and principles and wished to see the downfall

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of his influence in the Brahmo Somaj. The first doctrine to which they specially objected was the reverence and faith which Keshub taught must be accorded to the Great Men of the world, the prophets and elder brothers of mankind, who came to establish their several ideals of spirituality. Since Keshub's lecture on Great Men in 1866, this doctrine was making steady progress in the Brahmo Somaj of India, and the more it developed, the more it led to the suspicion in some minds that Keshub's teaching of such things meant the encouragement of man-worship in general, and his own worship in particular. In spite of all the contradictions and explanations given six years ago, at the time of the revival at Monghyr, there was always a lurking distrust in the minds of a number of Keshub's followers, that the main motive of his activities was the establishment of his own autocracy. Then, in the second place, Keshub's teaching on Special Providence was also strongly objected to. It seemed unreasonable to some men that God should be capable of being specially gracious on special occasions of life, and supplying the needs of His servants when in danger and difficulty they prayed unto Him. When in addition to all this, the doctrine of Inspiration was taught, namely, that the Holy Spirit breathed His impulses into the souls of faithful devotees, and directly commanded and guided them on all important emergencies of life, the rationalistic instincts of a section of men in the Brahmo Somaj were too greatly shocked. In the third place, they protested against some of Keshub's ideas on Social Reform. They complained he did not give sufficient emphasis to the emancipation of woman. A controversy arose about this time in the *Brahma Mandir* as to whether the ladies should be seated in a reserved covered gallery, or promiscuously among the male congregation. And so warm did the controversy become, that it very nearly resulted in a rupture among the progressive members of the Brahmo Somaj of India. These signs of disagreement first showed themselves in 1872, but in two years became still more marked. The opponents of Keshub's influence, who are now the most prominent members of the *Sadharan Brahmo Somaj*, started a magazine called the *Samadarshi* (Impartial Observer), embodying these views, about 1874. They also tried to start a rival congregation. But Keshub's genius was still so paramount that such effort failed. They, however, felt continually deeper and deeper distrust of Keshub's ideas and motives. They gradually ceased to attend the Divine services at

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the *Brahma Mandir*. At some of the congregational meetings, they indulged in long and painful disputes tending to question Keshub's authority and the justice of his measures. The personal demeanour, the devotional exercises, the private self-denials of Keshub and his intimate friends were repeatedly criticised and set down as sectarian, unnatural, mischievous. The management of the affairs of the Brahmo Somaj of India, the Ministry of the *Brahma Mandir* (vested in Keshub from the foundation), the organisation and operations of the Brahmo Mission were also severely found fault with, and construed into grounds upon which a hostile movement might be reared up. Keshub regarded these symptoms with concern, sometimes he was pained beyond measure. But he did not at the time believe it was possible for his critics to establish a counter-organisation. It cannot be said he had much respect for their powers, or much sympathy with their aspirations. He looked upon them as a body of secularists who ought to be repressed. He looked upon their whole activity as a rationalistic reaction, necessarily provoked by the puritanic and apostolical character of his own movement. He earnestly hoped that when his great principles, revealed, as he was convinced, by the Spirit of God, developed and permeated the land, all such rationalism would be absorbed therein, and the hostility of his antagonists would be a fresh cause of strength and triumph to his own Church. Keshub was intensely conscious that Providence was working out a marvellous destiny for the Brahmo Somaj. He was conscious of continued revelations coming. He felt and awakened great impulses. He fully expected a great re-awakening. But up to now he said very little on these points. He thought the time had not yet come for it.

Keshub as a reformer meant simply to work out his instincts as a spiritual leader of men. The various measures of social change and improvement which he introduced were but the emphasised utterances of his determination to serve God and man. He was never led away by the common-place, slip-shod ideas of the day about the abolition of caste, or the emancipation of woman. He looked upon these as feeble intellectual fashions which the passing influence of European civilisation generated in immature minds, and which the healthy progress of national character would soon outgrow. What he felt practically indispensable for the moral and social welfare of his brethren, and for the enlightenment of the other sex, for the better organisation and lasting progress of

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the Society over which he presided, and the Hindu community in general, that he did, cautiously at first, but steadily, always allowing time and experience to shape his course. He equally avoided social stagnation and social radicalism. The more he gained in age, observation, and wisdom, the stronger became his conviction that the course of reform must progress in strict obedience to social law and moral order, conserving everything that is good and precious in the community around. He never meant to seal the stamp of finality on any one of his reforms; he always intended they should retain their character of progressiveness, and grow with the spirit of the times. His social ideals were not taken from Christian and European usages. He never failed to respect these, and learn from them. Perhaps unconsciously they largely modified his principles and conduct, but instinctively and deliberately he was a Hindu, and a sense of nationality, sometimes bordering upon intolerance, characterised his private life and public measures. He was a Hindu reformer in every sense. He was chivalrous in the honour he accorded to woman, but he could never tolerate in his mind the idea of an artificial, conventional, strong-mannered or strong-minded womanhood. He would rather err on the side of over-cautiousness than laxity in every measure of female reform. He had a photograph of his wife taken as seated by his side on the Himalayas, he squatting on a tiger-skin as a *Yogi*, with the *Ektara* in his hand, she helping him in his devotions. He had her represented as a primitive Aryan devotee, with wild flowers in her hair, busy making preparations for ceremonial worship. All this indicated his ideal of Hindu womanhood. His tender reverence for the other sex is fully illustrated in his ideas of the Motherhood of God.* Yet he was strongly against the University education of women. It shocked that very reverence. He protested against women being taught as men. He believed woman should be educated according to the bent of her nature. She should have an artistic, poetic education, with a practical training in household duties, elementary science and the laws of sanitation. He was against classical and mathematical women generally. He repudiated the popular custom of the seclusion of woman. But he believed in the retirement of woman; he was

Vide "The New Dispensation, its purposes, &c." Chap. XI, and the motto of female education in the Victoria Institution for girls, established by him.

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fond of saying there was such a thing as the *zenana* in the manifestation of the inner beauties of the nature of God. Against courtships, flirtations, frivolities, and forwardness in woman he was exceedingly stern. He was certainly not against the remarriage of child widows, but he always discouraged second marriages in men and women alike. He believed the marriage tie to be inviolable and eternal. He was very strong against infant marriages, but he was in favour of early betrothals, and he never liked late marriages in women. Though himself the first to bring about intermarriage among the castes in his country, he was always for marrying people within their own caste whenever that was possible to arrange. He never directly persuaded his followers to give up their caste, he never made caste-breaking the test or rule of his religion. But so effectually did he inculcate and practise the principles of mutual love, so steadily did he attempt the establishment of human fraternity, the true household of God, that men were constrained by their conscience to abjure the unbrotherly distinctions of orthodox Hinduism, and caste fell dead in the Brahmo Somaj, self-condemned. As a reformer of caste, of woman, of intemperance, of marriage customs, as a social re-constructor, and an educationist, his reputation was great, but when we take into account the spiritual fervour, the apostolical purity, the national genius that inspired those reforms, we find in Keshub Chunder Sen a leader of the old patriarchical order, Hebrew, or Aryan, a man exerting to establish the kingdom of righteousness, and the majesty of God, under impulses before which society bent itself in plastic submission and reverent obedience.

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CHAPTER IX.

SPIRITUALITIES AND CLASSIFICATIONS.

KESHUB AS A DEVOTEE AND HOUSEHOLDER, 1875-1878.

FROM 1875 to 1878 Keshub was almost exclusively engaged in giving a closer organisation to the religion of the Brahmo Somaj. The various reforms to which allusion has been made, and incessant work in connection therewith, had somewhat cooled down the fervour of pious enthusiasm in the immediate circle of Keshub's followers. Unperceived by others, this was at once perceived by him. Ever since he had commenced his idependent career, ever since his religious genius had unfolded, he had used every duty, and every labour, as fuel to the spiritual fire that burned ceaselessly in the heart of his movement. His reforms were but the embodied impulses of a soul rapt in communion with God. His work was but the worship of his abundant activities of mind and body. When, therefore, he found that the secular and human usefulness of his church was interfering with its transcendent piety, he determined to change his tactics. He often complained that his friends could not establish due harmony between work and devotions. When they worked hard, it dulled their spiritual sensibilities, when they cultivated piety, their practical duties were neglected. The repeated and various struggles which Keshub made to secure this harmony would make a unique history of spiritual progress, and furnish the key to his manifold activities and developments. By constant vigilance and minute criticism of everything, he tried to maintain the equilibrium of a perfect church organisation. Circumstances, however, sometimes put the tendencies of the disciples beyond his control, and then he had to do something very extraordinary and develop a special order of culture. Such a time, he thought, had now come. "The leader observed symptoms of approaching worldliness creep into the movement," he wrote in the *Indian Mirror* about this time. "Higher plans of spiritual and mortal excellence had to be attained." The fact is that for some years past there had grown in the midst of the Brahmo Somaj a development of

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movement. It was very much more than the colourless culture of thought and discipline, somewhat foreign to the history of that of natural Theism ; it was far removed from the category of harmless abstractions fostered by a mataphysical eclecticism. In conformity to Keshub's original profession of finding "a Religion of Life," he had gradually introduced certain rigid forms and classifications of religious conduct which tended to the segregation of the community into devotees and ordinary worshippers.

This change began to manifest itself in the beginning of the year 1875. While Keshub's various institutions flourished around him, and his reforms bore ample fruit, while as leader of the Brahmo Somaj honour was lavished upon him both by the European and Hindu communities alike, so that his highest ambition might be satisfied, all on a sudden, about the middle of 1875, he reverted to his old melancholy. His prayers became sorrowful and despondent, he grew taciturn, impenetrable, and at last began to undergo the severe fatigue of cooking his own meals. Sometimes he would sit on a bare, wooden stool for the whole day, talking very little, mending some of his old clothes. The family was concerned, and the immediate disciples felt some great change was at hand. The evening conversations, when the chief followers gathered around him, formed the medium through which he explained his deepest views on every subject, and he gave us to understand that he was much mortified at the symptoms of worldliness and self-indulgence which the community presented. He felt the time had come for himself and the Brahmo missionaries to practise asceticism, and accept strict discipline for the sake of purity and spiritual life. He expressed a wish that the cooking of meals, which he had undertaken, should be adopted as the first instalment of such discipline by them all. One predisposing cause to such renewed self-examination and austerity was the lawsuit forced upon the Brahmo Somaj under the name of the *Bharat Asram* Libel case referred to before. It cannot be said that the whole Brahmo community sided with Keshub, nay, a large number of them, in fact a good many of the present leaders of the *Sadharan Somaj* were bitterly hostile to him. And though the libellers had to make public apology in the High Court for their misconduct, thus evidencing the righteousness of the prosecution, the trouble and anxiety deeply affected Keshub and his companions. He felt that an intenser course of spiritual life was necessary for the community. The cry for *Vairagya,* renunciation, detachment from worldliness of every kind, thus arose.

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The Minister denounced the tendencies of his flock, and showed the example in his own life by adopting rigid self-discipline. Strict poverty was enjoined on the Missionaries, long hours were spent in devotions, every one had to cook his simple meal at least once a day, midnight vigils were begun to be kept, and the agitation, consequent on all this, was somewhat needlessly aggravated by newspaper articles and controversies. Keshub gave explanations when they were sought in good spirit, but no amount of clamour availed to dissuade him from the disciplines and new orders of piety which he introduced. Month after month the pious exercises took definite character and formulated themselves. The very next year showed this development in the form of a classification of Brahmo devotees. It began thus.

The movement of *Vairagya,* or asceticism, held up to great prominence at the time, marked the beginning of a new era. The fact is the whole system of Keshub's teaching and personal character had fostered an intense type of faith and doctrine exceedingly different from the free and easy standards of antecedent Brahmoism. From the moment he had entered the Brahmo Somaj, he had taken the vow of finding in it "a Religion of Life," as opposed to the religion of theories. Every principle that he developed, every reform that he undertook, was the result of that vow. And now more than ever he resolved to be true to it. The whole period of 1876 witnessed an unceasing development in this direction. He and his followers had formed special relations to Christianity, and to the popular religions of India, such as *Vaishnavism*—relations which their trials, sorrows, and circumstances rendered inevitable. Thus, when they were expelled from the parent Somaj at Jorasanko, when their helplessness, poverty, sense of sin, and mutual differences reached the point of a crisis, they were led by inner and involuntary impulses to embrace the consolations of Christ's life and death. When they were cold, lifeless, desponding, they naturally had recourse to the enthusiasm and excitement of the *Vaishnava* culture of *Bhakti,* or love of God, singing, violently dancing, and making up street processions, much to the disgust of the Theistic respectability that environed them. Year after year, one might almost say month after month, Keshub was importing increased measures of belief and discipline from the untheistic orthodoxies and popular standards found among Hindus, Mahomedans and Christians. And his consequent deviations from the known rules and ideals of so-called Brahmoism became marked and unmistak-

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able. Babu Devendra Nath Tagore and his party resented such departures, and protested against them most strongly. The gulf between his Somaj and Keshub's had widened continually, and now became impassable. Nay, it was not only the elder partly in the Brahmo Somaj, but a good number of young men also, those mostly who have now incorporated themselves into the *Sadharan Brahmo Somaj,* showed impatience at what they viewed as autocratic innovations. Keshub had in short set up his own standards of Brahmic life and doctrine, and these began to be recognised by the world. To such standards he gave an unprecedented significance when in the year 1876, he initiated the fourfold classification of devotees into the disciples of *Yoga, Bhakti, Jnan,* and *Sheba* or *Karma.**

For ten years systematically, from 1866 when he separated from the *Adi Brahmo Somaj,* he had attempted the formation of a rigid well-defined faith, out of the indefinite generalities of *Vedantic Theism.* He had proceeded step by step in this course of development, he had carried the whole Brahmo Somaj with him, there were but comparatively few unimportant exceptions, and now he consolidated his progress by creating strongly marked orders of devotees representing his ideas in a most concrete form. In the next year 1877, he introduced another classification by which he assigned the study of the four great religions of the world to four disciples, to one Hinduism, to another Christianity, to the third Mahomedanism, and to the fourth Buddhism. Some intelligent and sympathising friends, both in this country and England, took alarm at these distinctions and pointed out the danger that such developments had the tendency to lead the Brahmo Somaj from the main channels of the worlds' religious thought into side streams of special culture, which in the end might cause permanent division in the community. But Keshub justified the classification on the ground that moral exigencies of the church demanded definite disciplines which would cease as soon as the necessities were supplied. However, there could be no denial of the fact that the experiences, struggles, and unpopularities which these discussions and ascetic practices brought gave a disposition to Keshub's movement which might assume unexpected forms any day if the necessity arose

*Yoga is union with God by intense contemplation and introspection; *Bhakti* is union with God by intense love; *Jnan* is union with God by deep knowledge; and *Sheba* or *Karma* is the same union by service rendered unto fellowmen.

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for them. In Keshub's anniversary oration of 1876 he speaks thus towards the conclusion. "Who would stumble midway in his God-ward course with the huge mill-stone of lifeless dogmas hanging round his neck? Now I tell you plainly we do not mean to stand where we are. . . . what the Lord will reveal to us ten years hence who knows save He? We thank Him for the revelations already vouchsafed to us, but more He will yet reveal."*

Within a few months of the anniversary discourse, Keshub bought a small garden, for which he had been negotiating, about twelve miles from Calcutta. This he called *Sadhan Kanan*, "the garden for spiritual culture." Here he often retired, followed by most of the Brahmo missionaries, and laid down for himself and others a rigidly monastic life. The greater part of the day he spent in devotions, readings, meditations, and conversations on the most esoteric subjects. The children were taught to recite Sanskrit texts, and the ladies who were sometimes present, sat under the shadow of the trees singing hymns. Altogether the pursuits were most arcadian, profitable, and enjoyable. When they had a little time they drew water, hewed wood, made roads, and grew vegetables.

In the *Indian Mirror* of the time the following paragraph appeared:—

"Babu Keshub Chunder Sen and the disciples who live with him in the little garden (*Sadhan Kanan*) he has recently purchased, live in a perfectly primitive style. They all sit under the trees for their morning devotions which continue for seldom less than two hours and a half, squatting on grass mats, pieces of rough woollen stuff, and tiger-skins. Then they begin to cook their food which they finish eating by noonday time. Resting for half-an-hour, they engage in religious conversation which lasts for an hour. Then some of them do a little work, writing, reading, and otherwise employing themselves. In the afternoon they draw water, cut bamboos, make roads, and pave them, plant, remove, and water trees, construct their cabins, cleanse out various places, and are seen to work very diligently in the hot sun, some with pieces of wet cloth on their heads, some bare-headed. Working till six they rest for half an hour again, and then retire for solitary devotions. When the evening is advanced, say by half-past seven, they sing *Sankirtan* hymns, and issue

*"Our Faith and Experiences" *vide* Lectures in India.

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out in a procession chanting through the jungle-skirted village lanes, and usually enter a poor man's hut, there singing and praying for the benefit of the household. Babu Keshub Chunder Sen finds time amidst all these occupations to conduct his correspondence with Government officials and other big people, to arrange and take energetic measures for the progress and success of the Albert Hall scheme, and contribute to the newspapers. How long the present method of life will continue we cannot say, but so long as it lasts it is interesting and instructive." It is significant to note that the publication of this paragraph caused Keshub not a little concern, lest the description of these primitive methods of religious life should shock the tastes of the Brahmo Somaj community, and prejudice them against apostolic ideas which he wanted to introduce gradually. He even went the length of partially contradicting and explaining the statements made above with a view to prove that he and his disciples did nothing singular, or worthy of special praise. How different was the cautiousness from the perfect defiance of public opinion that characterised him only three or four years later in giving emphasis to the developments of the New Dispensation! But then Keshub claimed that during the latter period his relations with himself, and with the public had completely changed.

It is significant also of Keshub's many-sided character that amidst his rigorous self-disciplines as a devotee, while he lived with a shaven head in retirement, in the *Sadhan Kanan*, he was most earnest in his endeavours to found a public hall in the heart of the Native quarters of Calcutta for "the promotion of literary and social intercourse among all classes of the community." An association, styled the Albert Institute, was formed in April 1876 to carry out this object. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir R. Temple, was persuaded to be its patron, there was a president, a vice-president, a secretary, and a committee of sixteen members. It was resolved there should be a public hall in connection with the Institute, to be called the Albert Hall, for the following purposes:—(1) Library and newspaper reading, (2) Lectures and debates, (3) Soirees and musical entertainments, (4) Public meetings. Keshub in his missionary tours through the land had formed the acquaintance of some wealthy Native princes upon whom he prevailed to contribute liberally towards the hall. By the power of his reputation money poured in from every direction. The Albert Hall cost nearly Rs. 30,000, of

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which Keshub's friend the Maharajah Holkar of Indore gave Rs. 8,000. The Government of Bengal showed its appreciation of the scheme by contributing Rs. 5,000. Altogether the high patriotic object of the Albert Hall was successful, and at the present moment it forms the rallying ground of all sections of the community of Calcutta for purposes of religious, social, or intellectual improvement. It forms a fitting memorial to the catholic genius and character of its great founder.

The first development of Keshub's character as a devotee took place in 1867 when he began his independent career. The period, we are now dealing with, relates to the maturity of his devotions and disciplines, leading up to the first and final stages of the New Dispensation. Keshub's ideal of piety now became an intoxication and madness in God. His ideal of a true devotee's character, says he in the thirteenth chapter of the *Jeevan Veda* was threefold, the child, the madman, and the inebriate. He was not satisfied with calling God by the name of Father, he not only adopted the idea of Divine Motherhood, but made that the burden of his devotional exercises. He not only sang but joined those who danced in their enthusiasm of singing the name of God; a little later on he laughed and cried in the ecstacy of his devotions; he behaved as one under extreme excitement. He refused to allow to his reasoning powers any authority to control his devotional fervour. He seldom hesitated to express the greatest contempt for the intellect in regulating the relations between the devotee and his God. Reason, he said, was out of court here; it was entirely the province of faith and love, and he willingly submitted himself to be carried away by the impulses of this love. All the excesses of oriental piety, whether found in Palestine or Persia, Egypt or India, gradually found their embodiment in him. Men began to laugh at him, but he laughed at them, and said they did not know what they criticised. Such manifestations were contrary to his former nature, but he steadily grew into them. Up to his last day, however, Keshub retained immense powers of equilibrium in his nature. If his devotions were excessive, his meditative wisdom, the marvellous force of his will, his intellectual balance, his habit of mental concentration were also enormous. He cultivated every kind of spiritual virtue with unabated persistency. "When the love of God," says he "grew within me into a rapture, I felt that to give my feelings due steadiness, *Yoga* (communion with God by mental concentration) was necessary. This excitement of the devotional sentiment might be merely temporary, I must seek the means to give it permanence.

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Bhakti sweetens *Yoga*, but *Yoga* concerts *Bhakti* into pure reverence. Perhaps *Bhakti* might have led me to superstition, perhaps *Yoga* might have led me to pantheism. But by the combination of the two, the gardens of Divine love grew upon the mountains of communion?"* Thus within a comparatively short time Keshub's devotions consolidated into transcendental insight. He acquired a prophetic vision into the hidden things both of Hindu and Christian theology. He recast and re-interpreted the conceptions of the *Vedic* and *Puranic* religion. He dissolved the gods and goddesses of his people in spiritual analysis, and refilled the Hindu pantheon with immortal ideals of wisdom and piety. The popular deities of the land were divested of their idolatrous embodiment, explained in their esoteric meaning, and became sublimated into the poetry and æsthetics of reformed Hinduism. He boldly dealt with the Christian doctrines of the *Logos*, the Incarnation, and the Preëxistence of Christ. He attempted the rehabilitation of Christianity in the faith and reverence of his countrymen. He went into the discussion of the most obscure questions of the essence of Nature, and the human spirit. His fervid, glowing conceptions found utterance in language, worship, and symbolism which for a time were misunderstood. But underneath it all, there was the rapt communion of the human and the Divine; there was the restoration of the national standards of piety. Like his whole character, his devotions were most complex, every fibre of faith, feeling, culture, wisdom, insight being woven together, yet the complexity assimilated itself so well with his nature that the prayers and precepts that resulted therefrom were of the simplest and most natural description. The deepest philosophy became a child-like fervour of faith and feeling. Ignorant men and illiterate women, even little boys and girls became charmed by the mystery of his devotional utterances. These, when collected, will make a mighty memorial of his spiritul genius.† His best prayers are in the vernacular, and they are untranslatable into any foreign tongue. They are the artless accents of a man who empties his whole being into the bosom of a felt Infinite, and communes with the reality of the Divine Spirit. Keshub laid down as the distinctive feature of his religion a direct and immediate intercourse with the Soul of God. And his recorded devotions

*Jeevan Veda, chap. IX.

†"উপদেশ" ও "প্রার্থনা।"

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testify that he enjoyed to the fullest measure that intercourse. He subordinated every duty and every act of his life to his prayer. For long years, in fact from 1875 to 1883, the best part of the day, from morning till noon, was spent in the daily service at his household sanctuary. His intimate friends and disciples met there at about nine, and the devotional exercises were continued sometimes till one o'clock in the afternoon. So long as Keshub was in good health, he every day conducted the whole service, but latterly he had not the necessary strength for that. The sanctuary was the darling object of his heart. He set apart one of the largest and best rooms of his house for it. He adorned it in every conceivable way with the simplicity and taste which he possessed in such abundance. After his morning ablutions, he came down punctually into the garden to cut the best flowers to be placed near the pulpit at the time of worship. The first and best fruits of the year were laid out there. Keshub's scanty income, from whatever source it came, was also placed there for consecration. The seats of the Brahmo missionaries and other devotees were arranged in a square around the pulpit, each seat being nothing more than a deer or tiger skin, surmounted by about a square foot of red woollen cloth. The musical appurtenances of the singing apostle were there, the *Khole, Kartal* and *Ektara* were there, and also the bugle, which Keshub himself sounded so often when he went out with his apostles on missionary expeditions. Every visitor from foreign countries, who was attracted to Keshub's house, was shown into the sanctuary whence Keshub drew his inspirations, and where he laid down the laws and institutions of the New Dispensation.

Keshub had a wonderful faith in the efficacy of prayer. A dogged persistency in prayerfulness characterised him at all times. With him it was an instinct. He had never reasoned about it, never had any doubt occurred to him, he always clung to prayer with a simple childlike tenacity. He was exceedingly realistic in his prayers, seldom cared to indulge in art or imagination, but prayed outright for every need he felt. "The first lesson of the scriptures of my life," says he "is prayer. In the twilight of my religious career, the voice rose in my heart saying "Pray, always pray, there is no other way than prayer." In those days he had neither the flow of language, nor the power of emotion, but still he prayed on, and tried to live purely. Latterly, as he gained in wisdom and matured in piety, he discovered in prayer the

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inviolable and essential law of spiritual progress. He never believed that the nature of God could be at any time changed by our devotions, the Divine was immutable. But he held that the law of grace, and growth of religious life demanded faithful prayer on our part. Hearty prayer changes a man's mental constitution, and reveals all things to him from a new point of view. Constant prayer renews a man's life entirely. He gains new wisdom, new insight, fresh flow of heart and force of will, derived from a knowledge of the purposes and secrets of God. The more a man prays, the more divine he becomes in every relation of life. "If I asked," says he "what religion I should adopt, prayer answered the question. If I wanted to know whether or not I should give up my worldly prospects and become a missionary, prayer brought me the answer. Prayer determined what relations I should bear to my wife, and it was prayer that regulated my conduct in pecuniary concerns."* When his friends quarrelled among themselves, he enjoined upon them to go and pray together. when one of his servants, a mere boy, committed a theft in his house, he knelt down, and prayed by the side of the culprit. One peculiarity of his prayerfulness was that he not only prayed but wanted and waited for an answer to his supplications. In all his devotional exercises, therefore, the doctrine of inspiration and divine commandment actuated him very deeply. Whatever response he obtained in this way was always the guiding principle of his life. This he called by the much disputed name of *Adesh* (divine command). In the smallest matters of daily life, whenever he was in difficulty he walked by the light of this *Adesh*. In every social reform that he ever undertook, this response to prayer was his only guide. In the management of the *Bharat Asram*, in every important affair that related to the inmates of that institution, he insisted on the command of God being sought, an idea which not a few of his friends secretly ridiculed. When in the marriage of his daughter to the Maharajah of Cooch Behar, he pleaded that he had been led by the Spirit of God to give his sanction to the marriage, his enemies, nay, the whole world, grew furious. Yet Keshub in this instance said nothing which he had not habitually said during the whole course of his spiritual life. In a letter to Prof. Max Müller in the last year of his life, he reviews the past thus:—"These twenty-five years the Holy Ghost has been to me not only Teacher and Guide,

**Jeevan Veda*, Chap. I.

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but also my Guardian and Protector. He has given me the bread of inspiration, and to His directions too I owe my daily bread. I never knew any *Guru* or priest, but in all matters affecting the higher life I have always sought and found light in the direct counsels of the Holy Spirit. Nor could I ever count upon a definite income for my large family, and yet through darkness and uncertainty the Holy Ghost has led me on, feeding me, my wife, ten children, and even giving us the comforts of life. From how many perils, dangers, and temptations has He delivered me! How many times has He shown me the light of Heaven! or I would have perished. To so good a Spirit I look as to a personal Friend and daily Companion, and I have made up my mind never to turn away from Him to Whom I owe all that I prize in my temporal and my spiritual life." Men criticised his conduct by their own rules, and when he claimed to be judged by the only rule which had ever controlled his conduct, they set him down as a dissembler or a fool! In the process of obeying the impulse, he might now and then err in judgment, or the selection of means, but the main motive which actuated him, he fully believed, was God-sent and unerring. This principle, applied to the difficult and involved circumstances of his life, might clear up a good deal that is now misunderstood. To Keshub Chunder Sen prayer was the only medium of communication between God and man, the only unfailing law of light and guidance. His whole life as a devotee developed out of that. The forms of his prayer were utterly unconventional. A perfect master of his mother tongue he poured forth his aspirations in a stream of chaste pellucid poetry to which it was a delight to listen. Now and again he descended to the homeliest, simplest, most familiar vernacular, far away indeed from the language of the Scribes and Pharisees, whose notions of respectability and reverence were shocked thereby, but anon he ascended to flights of expression and sentiment which nothing in the religious literature of any country could excel. His face assumed a strange beauty when he was in the rapture of devotional excitement; an unconscious smile played upon his noble handsome features; tall and athletic as he was, his whole attitude was erect and full of light; many among the congregation gazed upon his face with wonder. Strange to relate, after the fierce agonies of his last moments, as soon as all was hushed in death, the same wonted, well-known smile returned, and lighted up, and glorified his countenance! The thousands that came to pay their last honours to him marvelled.

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They kept his sweet face uncovered till the funeral pyre was set fire to. Here then was a man who, upon the small beginnings of a simple spontaneous prayerfulness, gradually laid the structure of a spiritual life, the colossal proportions of which overshadowed the whole land. Keshub Chunder Sen bears undoubted testimony to the efficacy of prayer, the grand testimony of spiritual heroism and noble perfection achieved through the easy natural means within everybody's power, of asking for light and guidance from God.

Keshub assiduously cultivated the habit of realising the Spirit of God in everything. He grew into the habit of addressing flowers, forest, fire, water, everything that was beautiful or grand. All phenomena were symbolical to him. He evidently communed with some hidden personality in them. He spiritualised woman, and acquired the idea of the Supreme Mother; he spiritualised children, and occasionally worshipped God as the Supreme Child. No devout Roman Catholic could be more enthusiastic about the *Madonna* and her Infant, than he was about womanhood and childhood in general. Latterly, he began to show a singular fondness of attachment to his wife (contrasted with his indifference of the early days of their married life), and it required but a little insight to discover that his relations to her were intensely and exclusively spiritual. Now and then he showed a strange absorbed earnestness in caressing his infant children. Any one who observed him at those times could not but feel he was realising a personality in the child other than the child's own. He would retire into a bush at the *Belgharia* garden, sit under some favourite tree by the hour on the bare damp grass, keep talking as in a trance, and then rejoin his friends with a face kindling like the evening sky. The *Himalayas* were his favourite resort when he could go there, and while on the hills, he perceived an intimate sense of identity in himself with the great Indian sages and saints of the past. His prayers* became classical, rapt, *Vedic*. Those hills were holy to him, and he cherished their associations.† When there for the last time in 1883, it

**Vide "Himachaler Prarthana."*

†"These stupendous and lofty heights," he writes to Prof. Max Müller in 1882, "are dear and sacred to the Indians, as reminders of the glory of our Fatherland, and as a source of living inspiration amid the grovelling cares of the world." Again next year while at Simla he writes: "Alas! these blessed *Rishis* are dead and gone. On the plains of Bengal, where I live, I miss them: I see an entirely different generation, by no means loyal to their forefathers. But I do not miss them here. On these hills the ancient *Rishis* seem yet to

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was a great wish of his heart to establish a hermitage on the mountains, and spend there the remainder of his days. But his illness became too serious for him to be able to carry out this wish. Another favourite process of spiritual culture adopted by Keshub was his frequent communion with the lives and characters of prophets for whom he always felt a special affinity. His cherished aim was to live, to harmonise the characters of the greatest prophets in his own character. He had found in his ideal of Christ such a harmony. He had found in his Christ-ideal a combination of the embodiments of the deepest humanity, such as Socrates, *Sakya Muni, Chaitanya,* and other true sons of God. He always showed himself to be the sturdy opponent of sentimental reverence either to Christ or any other great man. He definitely struggled to be what they were, and he always urged his disciples to do the same. With this object he instituted the ceremony of what he called Pilgrimage to the Saints,* which meant nothing more than an intense spiritual effort to realise in consciousness the leading principles of the greatest teachers of mankind.† Amongst these, however, none was given the place that belonged to Jesus. His chief utterances on the subject of typical Divine Humanity had Christ for their burden. So far as such things admit of classification, Keshub's tenderest relations after those with Christ were with Chaitanya, the prophet of divine love in Bengal. The emotional development of his religion was very greatly indebted to this sweet character. It was from the *Vaishnava* cult perhaps he gathered his great faith in the efficacy of the utterance of the Divine Name. He felt little scruple to adopt any name of God found in use amongst orthodox Hindus, if he was sure that would serve the purpose of embodying a specific conception of Divine nature or attribute such as he wanted to emphasise. This not only nationalised the aspect of his addresses to the Deity. He intensely sympathised with the warmth and imagery of popular Hindu worship. His simple devout nature was stirred by the melodies, the flowers, the

live and move. I feel they are with me and in me. Everything recalls these saintly spirits to my mind, and I see before me not the agnostic's godless earth and sky, but the ancient Aryan devotee's *Surya, Váyu, Varuna,* and *Indra.*"

*"সাধু সমাগম।"

†The various principles and developments here enumerated summarily in connection with Keshub's character as a devotee have been more fully dwelt upon in the chapter devoted to the teachings of the New Dispensation.

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lights, the fragrances, the prostrations, the joyous enthusiastic singing of Hindu temples. He felt these were the spontaneous outgrowths of the national religious sentiment. He rigidly discarded the idolatry in them all; he never went to any Hindu temple, and far less showed any outward sympathy with what went on there. But his genius could instinctively separate the grossness from the genuineness of the elements of Hindu devotions, and he freely and deeply drank of the latter. His great aim was to adopt every feature of the devotional esthetics of orthodox Hinduism, eliminating therefrom only the polytheistic errors. A remarkable feature in Keshub's character was what, after repeated remonstrances, he insisted upon calling "asceticism." The melancholy of his early life has been described elsewhere. In later life he was very different; loving, joyful, beloved by all. But often and again the youthful melancholy re-appeared, and overshadowed his motives. Whenever the approaching indications of worldliness or sin in his church left him in mental solitude, he took shelter under the stern austerities of his nature. He cultivated asceticism, he cooked his own meals, he dressed in the mendicant's garb, he lived upon voluntary alms, he shaved his head and face; he did all this on principle, as means to certain ends, as disciplines which every one ought on occasions to adopt. When the necessity ceased the practices also ceased, and he reverted to his ordinary ways of life, but none who observed him could fail to see that though the practices were suspended, the principle was as active in his character as ever. A stoical, self-denying rigour formed the backbone of Keshub's genius. He enforced it upon himself, he wanted to enforce it upon others. It was a disposition which never let go its hold upon him, it was a bias of nature in him, it made him so very unlike other men, and perhaps contributed not a little to his occasional unpopularity. It cannot, on the other hand, be denied that this primitive austerity in Keshub's movement preserved its moral purity amidst so many transitions and sore trials. The holiness of his personal character could not be reproached even by his worst enemies. He combined the tenderest sentimentalities with the highest moral purity, a combination so rare to meet with in emotional India. He sternly maintained the standards of traditional Hindu simplicity in food and dress, he always held proverty to be an essential trait in the character of a religious teacher. He held asceticism to be one of the highest and most essential disciplines for every devotee.

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For these and similar reasons, Keshub's character as a devotee had a most magnetic and reproductive effect. He leavened the whole community in the midst of which he lived. Undoubtedly he influenced every section of the great surrounding mass of Hindu society more profoundly than any one thought at the time. Men latterly doubted whether to call him an orthodox or heterodox Hindu. His followers were known by the length, intensity, and retirement of their spiritual exercises. They were known by their vegetarian diet, the simplicity of their looks, the plainness of their dress, and the puritanic strictness of their morals. Keshub has given a new turn to modern Hinduism, and brought about a new reaction in it. His prayers furnished the perennial fountain from which our beloved Singing Apostle drew his inspiration of new hymns, sweet, true, and deep.* From those prayers, numberless sermons and precepts have sprung which have become the household phraseology of Brahmo families. Doctrines, festivals, disciplines, nay, the very idea of the New Dispensation itself, have flowed from the master's devotions, so heart-stirring they were. If he has done any service to his disciples, he has taught them the efficacy and sweetness of prayer. The whole current of the devotional life of the Brahmo Somaj he has turned wonderfully. He has published prayers, both in English and in the vernacular, which shall feed many souls in many generations. He has given an impetus to the publication of various kinds of meditative and devotional literature, which has a great and far-reaching future before it. He has raised a generation of deep-souled devotees in the Brahmo Somaj whose apostolic character commands honour wherever they go. The fertility of his movement, so long as he lived, was endless. In these times of doubt and materialistic grossness, Keshub Chunder Sen was a typical devotee, protesting against the prayerlessness of the age by his tender piety. May we not hope that the fires on the altar which he kindled will be fed by the aspirations of many ages, and that once more the modern Aryans of India shall inscribe their faith on the annals of the world's progress by the intensity of their communion with the eternal Spirit of God!

Keshub Chunder Sen was a model householder. His domestic life was the example of dutifulness, love, and fidelity. Not all the asceticism he ever preached and practised, not all the sacrifices he made of money or of health, not all the long

**Vide Brahma Sangit and Sankirtan.*

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travels he made, could take away one jot of the intense affection he always felt for his home and family.* Of the ten children, five sons and five daughters he had, all have survived him, and all, even the youngest, who emerged at his departure into the barest consciousness of his serene presence in the house, bear the same touching testimony of Keshub's fatherly tenderness. Yet he was never demonstrative in his affection. The same sweet reserve that characterised all his other relations prevailed in the domestic circle also. Nay, to the superficial observer it might sometimes seem he was unmindful of his duties at home. Mrs. Sen, or the children, when taken ill, were sometimes not attended to; the boys now and then had no one to superintend their studies. Keshub, amidst his too absorbing occupations, had no time to look to the details of his household management. There were kind friends, and devoted disciples who generally volunteered to do this for him. But whether all the domestic needs were satisfied or not, Keshub's ardent affection for his home was a part of his many-sided religion. If Mrs. Sen had the power to utter her experiences, she could unfold a tale of conjugal affection, which angels might listen to with joy, so mystical and tender was its depth and truth. Many perhaps will remember his published dialogue of the *Husband Soul to the Wife Soul.*† It might not unfitly be compared to Plato's, or Dante's, or Swedenborg's prophetic speculations. This dialogue gives some insight into the relationship which he held should exist ideally between husband and wife, and he faithfully tried to be true to that ideal all his life. In his numerous family, the sweetest and most tender relations, after his own example, characterise the inmates up to the present. Mrs. Sen's cruel widowhood is soothed by the genuine and deep affection which invariably waits upon her, wherever she turns her eye in her own household. It ought to be particularly mentioned that if Keshub wanted to do every duty he owed to his family, he was above all things most anxious that his wife should be initiated in the high order of spirituality which he himself practised. He made her sit by his side on the *Himalayan* rocks, while he sat in the ancient *Rishi* fashion, and

*Srijut Karuna Chandra Sen; Maharani Sunity Devi of Cooch Behar; Mrs. Sabitri Narayan; Mr. Nirmal Chandra Sen; Mr. Prafulla Chandra Sen; Maharani Sucharu Devi of Moyurbhanj; Mr. Saral Chandra Sen; Mrs. Monica Mahalanabis; Mrs. Sujata Sen; and Dr. Subrata Chandra Sen.

†"স্ত্রীর প্রতি উপদেশ।"

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KESHUB CHUNDER [illegible] (HIS WIFE)

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travels he made, could take away one jot of the intense affection he always felt for his home and family.* Of the ten children, five sons and five daughters he had, all have survived him, and all, even the youngest, who emerged at his departure into the barest consciousness of his serene presence in the house, bear the same touching testimony of Keshub's fatherly tenderness. Yet he was never demonstrative in his affection. The same sweet reserve that characterised all his other relations prevailed in the domestic circle also. Nay, to the superficial observer it might sometimes seem he was unmindful of his duties at home. Mrs. Sen, or the children, when taken ill, were sometimes not attended to; the boys now and then had no one to superintend their studies. Keshub, amidst his too absorbing occupations, had no time to look to the details of his household management. There were kind friends, and devoted disciples who generally volunteered to do this for him. But whether all the domestic needs were satisfied or not, Keshub's ardent affection for his home was a part of his many-sided religion. If Mrs. Sen had the power to utter her experiences, she could unfold a tale of conjugal affection, which angels might listen to with joy, so mystical and tender was its depth and truth. Many perhaps will remember his published dialogue of the *Husband Soul to the Wife Soul.*† It might not unfitly be compared to Plato's, or Dante's, or Swedenborg's prophetic speculations. This dialogue gives some insight into the relationship which he held should exist ideally between husband and wife, and he faithfully tried to be true to that ideal all his life. In his numerous family, the sweetest and most tender relations, after his own example, characterise the inmates up to the present. Mrs. Sen's cruel widowhood is soothed by the genuine and deep affection which invariably waits upon her, wherever she turns her eye in her own household. It ought to be particularly mentioned that if Keshub wanted to do every duty he owed to his family, he was above all things most anxious that his wife should be initiated in the high order of spirituality which he himself practised. He made her sit by his side on the Himalayan rocks, while he sat in the ancient *Rishi* fashion, and

* [illegible] Sunity Devi of Cooch Behar; Mrs. [illegible] Sen; Mr. Prafulla Chandra Sen; [illegible]; Mr. Saral Chandra Sen; Mrs. [illegible], and Dr. Subrata Chandra Sen.

† [illegible]

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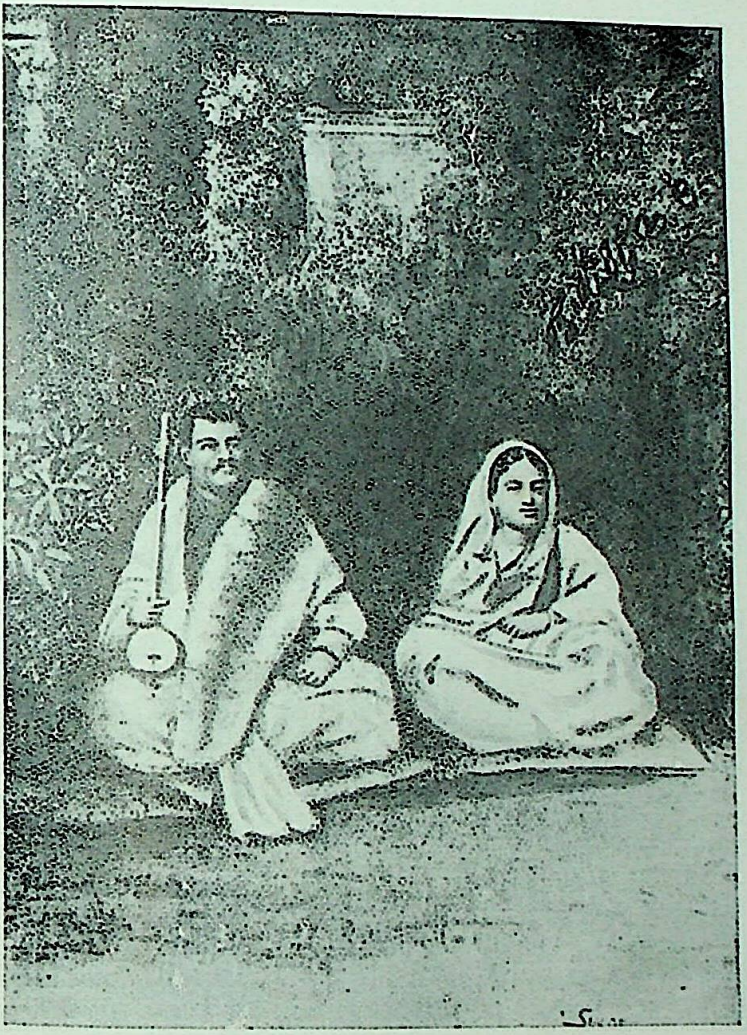

KESHUB CHUNDER. JAGANMOHINI (HIS WIFE).

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cultivated communion with God in *Yoga*. He dressed her in the yellow ascetic garb, with the *Ektara* in her hand, and on certain great occasions gave her a seat near him in the domestic sanctuary where the other devotees sat. She presided over the ladies' devotional meetings regularly held every week. Keshub wished his wife to take the same place amongst the women of the Church which he had taken amongst the men, by trying to impart to her the same virtues which he himself possessed: he wanted his wife to be a fellow-ascetic, and a fellow-devotee with him.*

As long as Keshub lived in the Colutolah house, that large ancestral mansion was the resort of the great and good from the whole country, one might say from the whole world; so that at last it became too small for his requirements. Viceroys, Members of Parliament, and Maharajahs, the youth and intelligence of the whole city resorted there. In fact, Keshub's necessities became daily so extensive, that since his return from Europe he was often thinking of a residence better able to meet the exigencies of his position. The other inmates of the family-house, too, became restive under the perpetual agitation and publicity which Keshub's presence brought upon the common domicile. The servants, especially the door-keepers, who were paid out of the joint funds, often made an outcry against the continued flow of visitors up to midnight, or the small hours of the morning. Keshub hence felt the urgent need of an independent house for himself. For brief intervals of time he had removed with his family to apartments in the *Bharat Asram,* but that did not suit him permanently. His domestic instincts, under the impulse of religion, demanded what he called a "Settlement," and he began to write discourses on that subject in the middle of 1877. Fortunately, towards the autumn of that year, a fine residence at No. 72, Upper Circular Road, was offered for sale. It was a large mansion, with a garden and tank, and extensive lands adjoining. The price too was large, it was Rs. 20,000. When Keshub announced his determination to purchase this property, men were startled, they thought it was beyond his means and position. But he had better notions of his requirements, resources, and place in society. At considerable risk and liability Keshub bought the house, which was subsequently

For fuller account, see her Life ("Devi Jagannmohini"*) by the Rev. Bhai Priyanath Mallik.

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consecrated as "Lily Cottage."† He removed there in October, 1877. This provoked considerable jealousy among his friends and relatives, and not a few Brahmos disliked the appearance of the fine residence which their Minister, in spite of his professions of asceticism, secured. Keshub bore this jealousy with his habitual calmness, and felt grateful for the warm and enthusiastic sympathy which his immediate friends and disciples showed on the occasion. For several months, nay, almost to the end of 1877, he was actively occupied in fitting up and laying out Lily Cottage and its garden, which was the future centre of so many characteristic developments of the religion of the Brahmo Somaj. His first act was to set apart the finest room in the house for the domestic sanctuary, where all his fellow-devotees, both men and women, should meet. His next act was to furnish a drawing room for the reception of his many visitors, both European and Indian He planned his library and sitting room, extended his gardens and tank, but in the midst of it all, set up a little straw-thatched hut, where he might practise solitary devotions and self-discipline. Who anticipated that Lily Cottage, so early next year was to be the scene of the august festivities of the Cooch Behar marriage? As soon, however, as Keshub had a house of his own, and settled there, his anxiety was how his intimate companions, the Brahmo Missionaries, might find a similar settlement. With this object he persuaded them to sell off their effects, and build houses in his neighbourhood.* He made a valuable grant of land to those who had not the wherewithal to buy or build. And those who had means, purchased building plots from him, as he had plenty of land to dispose of from his own compound. Small houses and cottages thus began to rear their heads, and Keshub consecrated the neighbourhood as *Mangal Bari* (the abode of welfare). The little colony which Keshub set his heart upon establishing at Upper Circular Road was not completed before two years more. He meant it to be an apostolic community on the model of the *Bharat Asram*, which had been so beneficial. It was a semi-suburban locality at the eastern end of Calcutta,

†In 1927, purchased and made a Trust by Her Highness Maharani Sunity Devi, C.I., of Cooch Behar for the location of the *Nava Devalaya* (the family Sanctuary) and the Victoria Institution for girls.

*The author Rev. P. C. Mozoomdar purchased a house on his own account and named it the "Peace Cottage" where he lived, next door to the "Lily Cottage." In 1929, it has been made a Trust by his widow Mrs. Soudamini Mozoomdar in sacred and loving memory of her husband.

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with plenty of garden and greenery on all sides. The nine families that first gathered were trained to live on terms of genuine affection and mutual dependence. Both the men and women everyday congregated for morning service in the house of the Minister. The ladies attended the meetings of the Ladies' Institution and the weekly service in the *Mandir*. The boys and girls were sent to the Albert College. Altogether there were the elements of a healthy little community, which could perform important experiments of social reform on a proper scale, and on an independent footing. Keshub felt that the New Dispensation was bound to prove to the world that this all-important experiment of a society founded upon strictly Theistic and apostolical principles, could be a success in all respects.

It becomes necessary here to explain an important principle of Keshub Chunder Sen's life, namely, the reconciliation of his character as an ascetic and a man of the world, as a devotee and a house-holder. Fair, fat and florid, it was difficult for those who saw Keshub to make him out as an ascetic. His house stood nearly on ten bighas of land, he lived in a garden filled with flowers and fruit trees, a wide well-paved street ran through his extensive compound, and ended under a portico where stood his carriage with the horse ready-harnessed to take him to the town. It was difficult to make him out as an ascetic. Yet on no religious principle did Keshub in latter times lay so much stress as on the principle of asceticism. He was a man of sufficient natural shrewdness to be able to understand that professions of self-denial never impress people without the actual practice of some real rigor in habits of personal life. Did he practise that rigor? Where lay his asceticism? Why did people, many even among his own friends, fail to see the connection between his actual practices and avowed principles of stoic self-denial? The reason of all this is that people imagined his ideas of asceticism were exactly those with which they were familiar in the history of other religious sects. They should have from the beginning renounced this supposition. We have already tried to explain that asceticism in the Brahmo Somaj means nothing more than a consistent religious discipline. It is never considered as an end, a virtue in itself, but only as a means to an end. Asceticism leads to poverty of spirit, to simplicity of habits, to a contempt of carnality and worldliness, to foster devotional habits, increased dependence upon God, and a culture or personal sympathy

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with the great departed of the religious world. As a means and stimulant of these virtues, ascetic self-denial should be practised from time to time. But asceticism must not be allowed to violate any of the laws which should regulate human life in its different relations, because all these laws are established by the direct will and commandment of God. It is only as *one* of the laws of spiritual life that asceticism is enjoined to be practised. Asceticism should never be allowed to stand in the way of man in his bodily, domestic, social and moral duties. Hence Keshub Chunder Sen's ideas on the subject of asceticism were different from those held usually by religious sectaries. He never practised the same form of asceticism all his life. He practised it as long as he was in need of the particular phase of religious life which it was calculated to produce. Having realised that, he left it, and took to the performance of some other form of self-denial and discipline. He never inculcated the perpetuation of any particular form of asceticism. He inculcated and practised the perpetuation of the spirit of self-discipline, varying the forms and means according to time, needs, and the natures of men. The principle which he held on the subject was that the strict regulation of bodily habits, and the renunciation of certain bodily pleasures, was indispensable to the growth of personal morality and religion. Now let us see how in his own life he tried to carry out this principle. It was in the year 1875 that he first imposed upon himself the painful habit of cooking his own food. Eating, which constitutes the principal act of our daily bodily habits, has been more or less scrupulously regulated and disciplined by every religious teacher, and nowhere so much as in India. So Keshub first applied his doctrine of asceticism to his food. He did this all at once without consulting anybody, or asking any of his disciples to do as he did. When he found its efficacy he advised them to adopt it. He did it for two years nearly, in spite of ill-health, hot weather, and repeated remonstrances. He did it to practise the spirit of poverty and renunciation. One after another, all the Brahmo missionaries, and not a few laymen, adopted the practice. Then Keshub left off the habit to resume it again after three years in 1881, when the New Dispensation was announced. He left it off again. Similarly, about shaving his head. When in the *Sâdhan Kânan,* one morning he suddenly caused his head to be shaven, and put on the Hindu ascetic's yellow robes. Keshub had beautiful black wavy hair, the style of

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combing which formed a distinctive feature of his face. In a man of his position, intelligence, and personal appearance, this most singular act of shaving required a self-denial and moral courage which most people perhaps will not understand. His moral courage in doing whatever he thought right was astonishing, and formed a strange contrast to his natural timidity and shyness. He knew he would be ridiculed, and his motives misrepresented. But he felt in his heart this was a necessary thing to do, and he did it. It has been already said that when for certain reasons, for certain purposes of spiritual culture, he retired to the *Sâdhan Kânan* he hewed wood, drew water, and ate scanty meals. But when he concluded his vow, he returned to society with a well-oiled and well-combed head, with flowing robes, and cheerful looks to mix with the highest and richest in the land. He dined with the Viceroy at Government House, but touched nothing but herbs and water. Generally speaking he was not a lover of personal luxuries of any kind. His place in society made it necessary sometimes that he should wear shining boots, and costly broadcloth, but in private life he always protested against this by wearing coarse native shoes, and simple *dhoties*, and abjured most ordinary little comforts in which nobody saw any fault. For instance, he had a settled dislike to eat out of metal and porcelain plates, and had his food served on the green leaves of plantain trees, drinking out of vessels made of the commonest earth. For a time he even dispensed with the humble plantain leaf, and his frugal meals were laid before him on the bare floor of his dining room. In March 1881, after he had celebrated the sacrament of Lord's Supper, he went through what he called the *Danda Dharan* ceremony. He adopted for the time the life of the thorough mendicant. He took the mendicant's garb, held in his hand the mendicant's staff or *danda*, and for weeks together lived strictly on the offerings of food made by the public. These practices provoked much unfavourable comment. His food, his clothes, his changed appearance excited alarm among his friends, lest he should forsake home and society to retire into the jungle as so many others have done. But here they were mistaken. Those austerities were temporary. Many such came and went. One thing, however, was constant. Keshub Chunder Sen always believed in the influence of bodily habits and outward practices upon the growth of moral and spiritual character, and that the order of Theism which he professed and preached was a religion

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of austere simplicity and self-denial, bound to make a courageous protest against the luxurious self-indulgence of the times.

But if such was the tendency of Keshub Chunder Sen, it did not certainly represent every side of his complex character. There were other parts of his nature which must be explained. Keshub looked upon himself as a householder. He believed he had an important example to show as a husband, as a father, as a subject, as a member of society. And he was as careful to do his duties in these capacities as in any other. He knew he was the head of a growing and powerful community which involved in itself the whole future of the land. And his personal likings for austerity and asceticism did not exhaust his whole field of life. He felt he must form the society and the household of Hindu Theists, that the public position of his movement depended upon his own conduct and mode of life. And hence he had to try to harmonise personal self-denial with domestic obligations and social dignity. He had taken the vow of asceticism, but neither his wife, nor his children had done so, he was therefore bound to keep them in comfort and respectability. He was not the creator of his circumstances. He believed that Providence had ordained his circumstances for him. And it was his sacred duty to be faithful to every member of his family. To be true to them was to be faithful to his Master Who had committed them to his care. He had always professed to behold the Divine in what was most natural. Therefore as he was true to his religious nature by cultivating the spirit of asceticism, so he was true to his domestic and social nature by being a model householder, and a worthy member of society. In these capacities then, he had to do many of those things which other men, who only have his social, and not his religious position, naturally do. He had to maintain his family and ancestral standing. He had to show courtesy to every class of society with whom he had been thrown in contact. He had to receive Europeans and Native gentlemen of the highest rank, and return them some of the attention and hospitality which they delighted to show him. His own son-in-law was a prince of very exalted position. Successive Viceroys had visited his home. His numerous admirers and followers from all parts of the country must assemble under his roof at least once a year. He had, therefore, to keep a large house. He had to keep an establishment of servants. He had to keep a carriage to take him to his numerous engagements. He had to marry his children in a manner

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worthy of his position. He maintained a printing press, where most of the books and newspapers of his Society were published, the chief source which yielded an inadequate income to support his extensive household of ten sons and daughters. * His strenuous attempts at establishing this harmony between the different capacities of his manifold life were not understood, and far less sympathised with by men who moved in one particular groove. The simplicities of his motives, and the complexities of his circumstances were not observed by superficial critics. And hence they continually accused him of inconsistencies, and misunderstood his actions. If Keshub Chunder Sen had only to play the part of an ascetic, and had no other relations of a great life to preservy and exemplify, he would find his duties exceedingly easy. If he had only to do the duty of a faithful householder or a mere religious and social leader, he would also find his duties sufficiently smooth and pleasant. But to be an ascetic, a devotee, an exemplary family man, a distinguished social reformer, and an original religious teacher he had to call forth all the energies and gifts of his nature to the fullest extent and look up to God alone for light and guidance. What peaceful harmony he was able to establish between these many functions of his life, how successfully he cultivated his natural faculties and aptitudes, and what profound responses his protracted devotions brought him, led his family, his friends, his numerous following, nay, his whole history, declare unto the world more fully than we can.

It is time now to speak of Keshub Chunder Sen's followers and fellow-devotees. His relations to these men formed a most characteristic feature of his life, and his conduct towards them was unique. The principal among them were

*Another small source of income was the sale of his books and tracts which during his lifetime amounted to very little. Keshub never received any salary, or regular help of any kind from the public. Sometimes he was in difficulty and want. He literally carried out the principle of never taking thought for the morrow. How his family was supported was a wonder to himself. He writes to an English friend in the last year of his life thus:—"Nor could I even count upon a definite income for my large family, and yet through darkness and uncertainty the Holy Ghost has led me on, feeding me, my wife, and ten children, and even giving me the comforts of life." Notwithstanding all this, his outward life was like that of a man of wealth and ease, while inwardly he lived up to the strict ideal of his "caste of poverty."

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the Brahmo missionaries, numbering eighteen men * including Keshub himself. Most of these men had each a special accomplishment. Wooma Nath Gupta had a primitive unswerving faith in Keshub's personality and teachings. Amrita Lal Bose, a man of much enthusiasm and energy, was the builder of the *Brahma Mandir;* Bejay Krishna Goswami had great love of God, or *Bhakti;* Mohendra Nath Bose did much personal service to Keshub, and has written a life of *Nanak* in Bengali; Kanti Chandra Mitra was in charge of Keshub's family, and was also put in charge of other missionary families; Aghor Nath Gupta was a holy and gentle character, devoted to *Yoga* and spiritual communion of every kind; he has written an excellent life of *Buddha;* Trailokya Nath Sanyal delighted the whole Brahmo Somaj by his powers of musical performance and poetic composition; Girish Chandra Sen, a simple industrious man, who has enriched the church by his knowledge of Persian and Arabic, making numerous translations, besides translating the entire *Koran,* from the writings of Muhammedan saints; Gour Govinda Ray, an austere tireless devotee, also a proficient Sanskrit scholar, who continually helped Keshub by discovering and expounding texts suitable to his purpose from the national scriptures; Prasanna Kumar Sen was Keshub's faithful personal assistant, who travelled with him to England; Kedar Nath Dey was a quiet devotee, and a man of considerable personal sacrifice; Dina Nath Mozumder, of a good sociable disposition, was the resident missionary in Behar; Peary Mohan Chowdhury, who went to England, did great service by rough writing, and then reproducing Keshub's Bengali sermons and prayers; Kali Shankar Kabiraj, joined as a missionary rather late; Ram Chandra Singha took pains to build the missionary neighbourhood known as *Mangal Bari;* Banga Chandra Ray was the enthusiastic and devoted missionary of East Bengal. Each of these persons had been early drawn into the Brahmo Somaj by Keshub's personal influence, some by his lectures and precepts, some by his devotions, others by the purity of his life

*(1) Keshub Chandra Sen, (2) Protap Chandra Mozoomdar, (3) Girish Chandra Sen, (4) Amrita Lal Bose, (5) Dinanath Mozoomdar, (6) Prosonno Kumar Sen, (7) Ram Chandra Sinha, (8) Mahendra Nath Bose, (9) Peary Mohan Choudry, (10) Gour Govinda Ray, (11) Kedar Nath De, (12) Banga Chandra Ray, (13) Troylokya Nath Sanyal, (14) Umanath Gupta, (15) Aghore Nath Gupta, (16) Kanty Chandra Mitter, Bejay Krishna Goswami and Kali Sankar Das.

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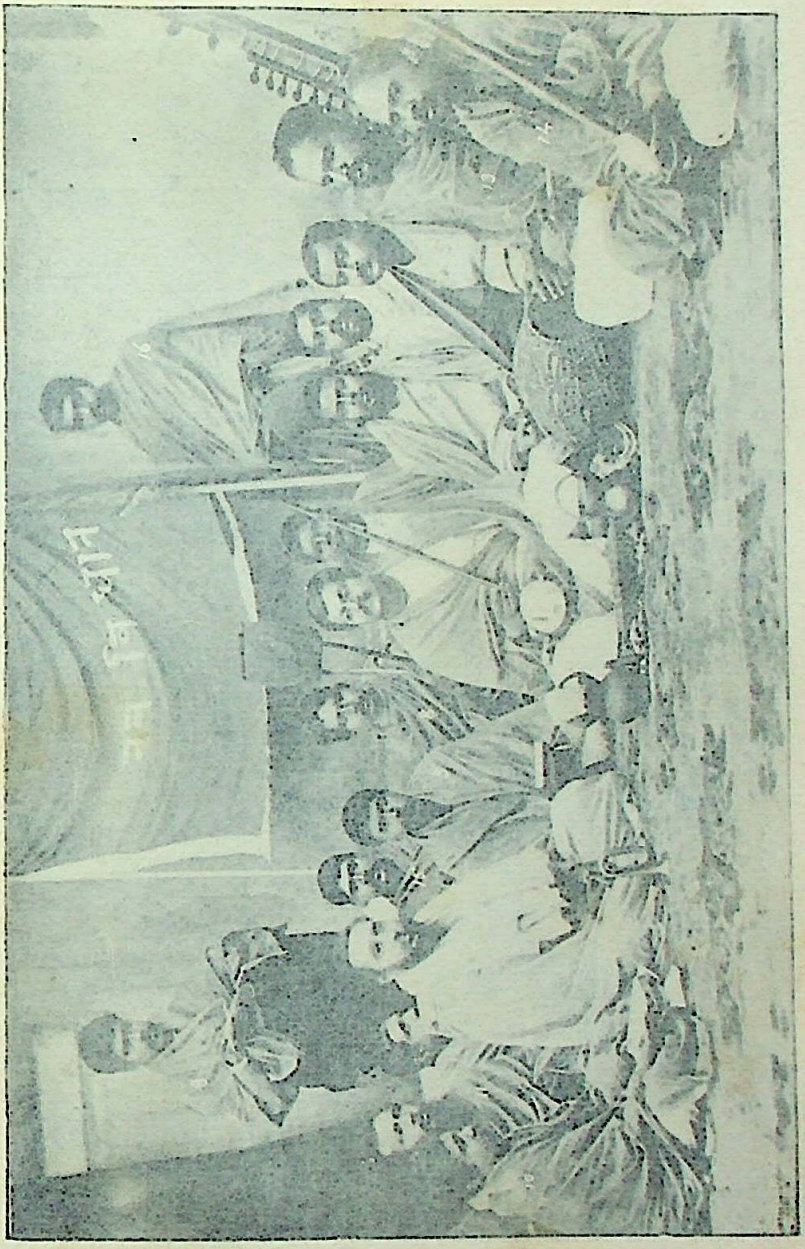

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* (1) Wooma Nath Gupta, (2) Amrita Lal Bose, (3) Girish Chandra Sen, (4) Kanti Lal Bose, (5) Dwarka Nath Mazoomdar, (6) Prosonno Kumar Sen, (7) Ram Chandra Singha, (8) Mahendra Nath Bose, (9) Peary Mohan Chowdry, (10) Gour Govinda Ray, (11) Kedar Nath De, (12) Banga Chandra Ray, (13) Trailokya Nath Sanyal, (14) Umanath Gupta, (15) Aghore Nath Gupta, (16) Kanty Chandra Mitter, Bejay Krishna Goswami and Kali Sanker Das.

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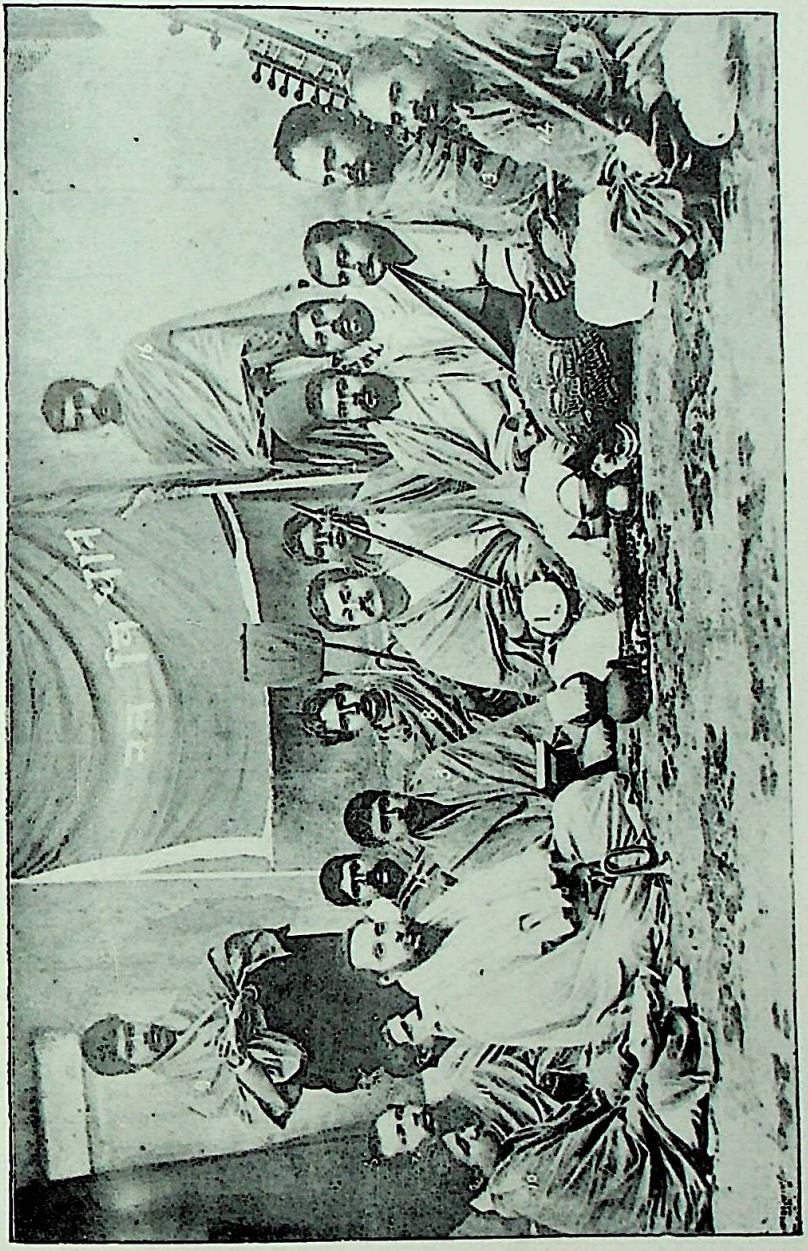

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and example. Keshub was a born fisher of men. From his infancy almost, it was his instinct to draw about him a number of kindred spirits, and as he grew up into a religious leader, he believed his principal work was to establish a fraternity of devoted men and women bound in strict apostolic principles. These were the men who formed the *Sangat Sava* about 1860, who formed the first batch of Brahmo missionaries in 1867, who formed the nucleus of the *Bharat Asram* in 1871, and the apostolic neighbourhood called *Mangal Bari,* near Keshub's home in 1877. They gathered around him by the magnetism of his character. He fully permeated them with his ideas, he ceaselessly associated them with his prayers, and his work. The establishment of a true brotherhood in the Brahmo Somaj was a subject of all-engrossing anxiety and labour to him. He drew each of this select circle of friends into a private personal relationship. Apart from all agreement in opinion, taste, and disposition, his personality was the centre of attraction to everybody. Those who had real confidence in him, or in whom he had confidence, were pointed to him by inner affinities. The men, named above, with a few others outside the circle of missionaries, were Keshub's church, his community, his colleagues, companions, sympathizers, supporters, helps. They stood faithful to him in a hundred trials and difficulties. He was never happy without them, they were never happy without him. He was their leader, their minister, their guardian, teacher, centre. He watched them ceaselessly, and helped to develop their special endowments. He arranged to remove their domestic wants, shielded them from public criticism, rebuked them for their short-comings, and helped them to find out the occupations of their life. They in their turn took charge of his person and his family, fed him, fostered him, escorted him, travelled with him, kept watch and ward over him. Their presence and enthusiastic participation in all his devotions, ideas and activities made his success as a devotee possible. Outside this little band of men Keshub had certainly an extensive following; thousands accepted his teachings, and honoured his character. But he concentrated all his efforts upon this very small number to create a centre of fraternal unity, wherein to form the whole mass of national life into a National Church. He systematically tried to bind the missionaries of his church into a holy and happy family. He met with a hundred disappointments and failures, but persisted in his attempts to the very last. It may be interesting to

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see how he treated them. It ought to be remembered that all these men had by their own accord given up their worldly avocations, and devoted themselves entirely to the service of the Church. Almost all of them were poor men, with insufficient education at first, which three or four wonderfully improved afterwards. Keshub persuaded them early to live the life of ascetics. When the Mission department of the Brahmo Somaj was organised in 1867, the few young men who then enlisted themselves as preachers had, among other privations, to subsist upon the scanty almsgiving of not an over-sympathetic public. They never took any salary, and sometimes enough food could not be found for them. The present writer remembers how at midday some of them ransacked Keshub's writing-box for a few *pice* wherewith to buy their daily food. This poverty, though not directly shared by Keshub, was instructive, suggestive, and sacred to him, who though their recognised leader, was always watching the good points of their character, and eager to learn therefrom. He found great faith in one, love in another, humility, self-denial, intelligence, purity, devoutness, and various other gifts in each of his devoted disciples, who, he steadfastly believed, were elected by God and appointed to their respective callings. But these gifts were not developed at first. He helped their unfolding by those long daily devotional services in his house which were begun almost at the same time as the rupture with the *Adi Somaj* in 1866. The progress of his own devotional feelings produced a corresponding effect upon the hearts of his associates, and every subsequent phase of spiritual life through which he passed was always reflected in their lives. When his attachment to the life and teachings of Christ showed itself they began to study the Bible and Christian writings with great animation. When he introduced the *Vaishnava* revival, they drank of the wild enthusiasm of song and dance. When he began and pushed on his social reforms they were untiring in their co-operation; they were the teachers of his schools, the editors of his newspapers, clerks of his offices, and keepers of the public funds, which he gathered, his representatives in every work. He and they formed, as it were, a great spiritual organ on which the breath of Providence played a grand solemn music both in sentiment and action. He felt his little apostolic community was organised and kept up not by himself but by the Spirit of God. Without the aid of the Brahmo missionaries he could not have done much, but without him their characters would

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never have unfolded. He made them preceptors, preachers, missionaries, apostles, it was by his influence that they became the leaders of the Brahmo Somaj movement; but he himself was the leader of these leaders. He discovered in each some great essential quality of a new religious dispensation, and not only did he not regard them as his inferiors and servants, but called himself their servant.* He hated to take the name of teacher or master. The mission work was organised in the following way. The affairs of the Brahmo Somaj of India, and the Indian Reform Association had been divided into different departments. There was the Mission Office; the Ministry of the *Brahma Mandir;* the various newspapers; the schools for boys and girls; the buildings; the societies; the charities. A missionary worker was generally placed at the head of these various institutions, expected to labour hard at his duties, and feel responsible for the good management of his work. These definite secular duties alternated with definite spiritual duties, such as missionary visitations in the provinces, conduct of religious services. Thus each missionary was bound to vary his usefulness by going through the largest amount of work, both temporal and devotional. The support of the missionaries was undertaken by the Brahmo Somaj of India of which Keshub was the Secretary. Each one of the establishments over which they presided was expected to contribute to their support, while the bulk of that responsibility fell upon the Brahmo public. All the missionaries joined to form a weekly Conference, afterwards called the *Apostolic Darbar,*† which was meant to be a self-controlling fraternity, and to conduct its affairs by the principle of unanimous agreement on every important question. Keshub was the president of the *Darbar.* The *Apostolic Darbar* was intended to be a regulative body, a society of elders which would preside over the entire Church, and it was composed exclusively of Brahmo Missionaries. Though there was an Annual Conference of Brahmos at the time of the anniversary in January, and they had the nominal power of changing the office-bearers of the Somaj, and modify its constitution, as a matter of fact this power was seldom exercised, and Brahmos generally had unbounded confidence in Keshub as their Secretary, and the Missionaries under his leadership.

**Vide Shevaker Nivedan.*

†"We, Apostles of the New Dispensation." *Vide* Lectures in India.

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The Brahmo Missionaries, for all these reasons, depended upon Keshub very naturally, and not only followed his example, but in every difficulty sought his verbal direction. For such dependence they were often characterised by unfriendly critics as servile imitators, blind sycophants, and other opprobrious epithets, and Keshub himself was charged with having robbed them of their independence, and converted them into his worshippers. It cannot be said the Brahmo Missionaries were fully competent to discharge the various functions and responsibilities that were placed upon them, and in the discussions which consequently arose, it was often found almost impossible to arrive at any joint decision. And hence the Brahmo Missionaries always sought Keshub's directions. Keshub's powers, both of thought and action, towered so high above every surrounding individuality, that his colleagues necessarily thought they could do nothing better than take from him the law of conduct at every emergency. He always discouraged such dependence, though he liked the confidence which it showed, and wanted every man to take his guidance from the Indwelling Inspirer. But nevertheless they looked up to him always. Besides it need not be concealed that considerable personal differences and jealousies disturbed the mutual relations of these immediate followers of Keshub, giving rise to unpleasant controversies which sorely offended him, surprised outsiders, and threatened the prospects of the whole movement. The worst effects of these unfortunate discords have been seen after Keshub's death, but when he was alive, they were frequent and serious enough. How Keshub dealt with these discordant men, through whom he had to carry on almost every part of his complex work, was an interesting feature of his character. His chief care in the latter years of his life was a strenuous long-continued attempt to establish harmony among them, because he knew that the whole future of the Brahmo Somaj, and the success of his own life-work lay in such harmony. His character and principles as an organiser and administrator were severely tested in leading these leaders of the Brahmo Somaj. The very first point that struck an outsider was the almost entire absence of any exercise of control in the body of missionary workers. Any one who at all knew Keshub would bear testimony that he was the reverse of a weak man, and his adversaries were of one opinion about the firmness of his character. He had a wonderful force of will over himself, and his circumstances. But he had a strange disinclination,

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one might perhaps call it incapacity, to enforce that will upon other men. No doubt he wanted to govern men, he was never a democrat in any sense; but his great aim was to govern men through their own free will, not by his authority. He held every man's independence to be a sacred birth-right with which he should never interfere. He called himself their minister, and helped the Brahmo missionaries, times without number, taking no end of means, to put them in the way of organising themselves into a self-governing brotherhood, but he never exercised force to control their voluntary activities. The result of it was that one man's activity collided with another's, independence fought with independence, especially as the respective fields of work intersected each other.. They differed and argued, wrangled and fought, and the leader calmly sat among them, often a dumb auditor, often an agonised spectator, throwing out a word or suggestion occasionally as oil over the troubled waters. Generally, however, he left the quarrels to adjust themselves. They all professed loyalty, faithfulness, obedience to him only; each felt Keshub was on his side, and each sought his verbal direction, his authoritative pronouncement. This was what he never gave. Hints, suggestions, proposals he would often make, but he was always most scrupulous to say yea or nay in matters which touched the moral sense of other men. Not that he was uncertain in his opinions, not that he had no personal feeling or interest in matters about which the difficulties arose. He was sometimes most indignant, most aggrieved, sometimes utterly victimised by the vagaries of his associates, but he always made it a most stern principle not to constrain the freedom, or the moral sense, or even the tastes and dispositions of his disciples. Says he in the *Jeevan Veda*:—"I have made independence the captain of my band. For this reason I call those who are with me my *friends*, I never call myself their *Guru* or master. Liberty shall triumph, truth shall triumph. When independence calls men, if any want to come let them come, let there be no *Guruism*. I hate subjection. What I abhor in myself, do I not hate in others? I cannot bear to see any one, even in the least in the Church, depend upon another; it is exceedingly unbearable to me to find any one depending upon me. Do you not know I have never been a slave to anybody, why then should you be slaves? He who has never been a slave himself, if he should try to make another his slave, or feel happy at another's slavery, is not he a sinner and a hypocrite? I am not a *Guru*,

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I have never tried to enslave men. I have always said I am a learner. If there be fifty men in my party, they are of fifty different kinds. Truth is my witness, the sun and moon are my witnesses, if there be a hundred men present here, everyone of them is individually his own chief and keeps his prevailing individuality. Everyone will have to acknowledge this before me now, and acknowledge it when I am gone. I have ground no man in my mill, but wished to see everyone free. I ask no one to call me *Guru*, or master, or governor, but look upon God alone as such."* Keshub must have felt it necessary to make such an avowal once for all, because he had been repeatedly charged with setting up his own worship, robbing men of their right of reason and liberty, and making them tools of his selfish purposes. No charge could be more absolutely baseless. If he could be charged with anything, he could be charged with indulging a fatal independence in the character of his disciples. He kept his independence, they kept theirs. Trouble arose because they wanted to assert their self-will under the sanction of his authority, and professed to act by his direct injunction to secure which they loudly claimed they had surrendered to him their own right of judgment and freedom of action. That surrender, however, Keshub never accepted or acknowledged, because there was an underlying individuality always retained. So while they thought they were submissive, he never gave them credit for true submission. While the public accused him of enslaving his followers he doubly suffered; suffered because of the hateful accusation; suffered also because he had no real control upon the lawless self-will of his subordinates. He watched with intense grief and alarm the progress of this destructive tendency in his movement. But his principle, perhaps the mildness of his nature, made him powerless to interfere. In its essence that principle was the human rendering of the impassiveness of Providence towards men's attitudes and actions. God suffers every manner of wrong-doing to take place, and allows individual freedom to wander to its extremest limit of wilfulness. He seldom opposes this false freedom with anything more serious than the general laws of righteousness often so mild and inoperative. But there is one thing which Providence secures. When the liberty of one man trenches upon the liberty of another, He causes these men to execute judgment upon each other. Such mutual punishment is always severe,

**Jeevan Veda*, Chap. V.

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and it might be very well taken as the retribution of God. This was the great law of personal leadership with Keshub Chunder Sen. He never hesitated to express his estimate of the several independent courses followed by his subordinates, but he never spoke directly to any one, he spoke of the shortcomings of one before the others, or he spoke fervently in the presence of all before the throne of God. Thus he tried to foster a public opinion by which the little community might govern itself, its individuals, as well as its general movements. Few members of the body could pretend ignorance of the leader's occasional disapproval of their respective shortcomings, nay, this disapproval conveyed through indirect and oftentimes unfriendly mediums, gathered only the greater force. But Keshub's uncommon gentleness, combined with the strict principle he had prescribed for himself in all such matters, made it impossible for him to exercise any direct government. For this reason Keshub was often set down as "a weak governor." He had heard this accusation repeatedly, he pleaded guilty to the ineffectual government, but he never pleaded guilty to the weakness. Tyranny, he maintained, was not the strongest government; patience, love, and long-suffering were the strongest. To the most urgent appeals for immediate advice, to the most vociferous manifestations of perplexity, to the most gushing effusions of confidence he generally responded by brief sentences, and now and then by impenetrable silence. To some extent this might be because he was the recipient of very contradictory confidences, and the arbiter of very contrary interests, all which required a perfect control of expression on his own part. He wanted to make every man's conscience a law unto himself, he wanted every man to receive that immediate direction and guidance from the Spirit of God within, which to him was the sole light of his path. He wanted every one of his apostles to be as free and God-inspired as he was himself. But the patience, passivity, and self-restraint this required, made him frequently appear somewhat weak and unsympathetic. His grand ideal of an apostolic community was the unity of inspiration from the source of light, and the unity of heart in perfect brotherly confidence. Hence he discarded the doctrine of the centralisation of power in any one man, he was the veriest antithesis of a Pope. All authority he held was the prerogative of love and responsible work; it was willingly surrendered in kind-hearted affection by the recognition of real work done. He certainly claimed high authority as leader, he was cons-

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cious of his own great position, but he wanted to give authority to every one, he wished every one to get his rightful position by virtue of the responsibility entrusted to him. He wanted his Church to be a self-governed apostolate where virtue recognised virtue, love submitted to love, and every personality found its due place and order. He believed in the harmony of every personality with the great principles of a divinely regulated dispensation. His responsibility he held was in giving form and coherence to the body, and this he did by laying down precepts, disciplines, principles which he expected men to adopt and follow by their independent spiritual discernment. The leading principles amongst these are embodied in the charge which Keshub gave to the Brahmo Missionaries on the Bengali New Year's Day in April, 1883, the last year of his life. We give it below:—

"Dearly beloved brethren, Apostles of the New Dispensation, here in this sanctuary assembled and elsewhere, know that the Lord our God commands you to be more strict and faithful in your adherence to ascetic principles than you have heretofore been. You shall take no thought for the morrow. Ye shall be perfectly free from all worldly cares and anxieties regarding your food and raiment. Ye shall not covet riches. Ye shall not seek gold or silver. Hitherto ye have lived partly upon alms and public charities, and partly upon private contributions. Hitherto you stood forward as ascetics with your solemn vow of self-surrender, but your wives stood apart, sharing neither the honours nor the privations of that holy vow. These anomalies the Lord forbids, and He commands you forthwith to remove them. Ye shall have nothing save that which comes through the Father's store-house in the Mission Office. What comes through other channels ye shall not touch. For yourselves and for your families take that only which the Lord gives to you: things which other hands provide are unclean. Teach your wives poverty, and in your journey to the Holy Land let them be fellow-pilgrims. A house divided against itself must fall. An ascetic husband and a worldly wife cannot make a happy home. If one seeks God and the other earthly riches, there can be no peace. Let us make our homes blessed apostolic homes, where the husband and the wife, like partners in spiritual wedlock-tied, shall live in peace at the feet of the Lord, and give Him their joint homage and service as *Vairagi* and *Vairagini* householders. All our friends and contributors are hereby warned not to depart from this holy injunction of our Lord. What they would give they should send direct to the Mission Office, or to the sanctuary. Let them not tempt our people by making them touch forbidden gold. Your servant, beloved Apostles, shall receive all alms and gifts for you, and your hands shall remain clean. There are three other things, brethren, to which the Lord calls your attention. Ye shall love one another more warmly than you have done before. Eschew all unbrotherly contention and wrangling, abandon selfishness, jealousy and pride, and be passionately attached to each other as brothers in the Lord. Thirdly, be Catholic, and give up all manner of sectarianism and exclusiveness.

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In this Apostolic band let each scripture be respected, and let each prophet be honoured, and let no form of devotion or piety be ignored. While your general character indicates the complete harmony of the New Dispensation, each of you shall represent particular scriptures and prophets, different aspects of faith and duty, and take charge of different districts and provinces as your mission field, so that this Apostolic family may be, as our Father wishes it to be, a truly representative assembly of the religious world. Lastly, make your consciences clean, and your hearts pure. Neglect not common duties in your zeal for asceticism and devotion. While ye seek the heights of *Yoga*, and the depths of *Bhakti*, you must discharge the little duties of your daily life with the utmost fidelity and care. Cultivate piety and moral purity simultaneously; and as you grow in faith and communion, show that you are also growing in veracity, and philanthropy, in domestic affections, and social virtues."

These principles resolve thus into (1) personal poverty and asceticism; (2) spiritual discipline in the household, holy relationship between husband and wife; (3) organisation and mutual relationship in the Brahmo Somaj Mission Office, which Keshub always looked upon as the storehouse of Providence; (4) mutual love among the missionaries, and the abandonment of all jealousy, selfishness, anger; (5) catholicity of spirit, and the acceptance of all scriptures, prophets, and aspects of faith and duty; (6) strict morality and dutifulness harmonised with contemplation, communion and love of God. These were the lines then on which Keshub always tried to train up his apostolic organisation. In one respect his success was great. He succeeded unquestionably in training up a number of devoted, pious, ascetic missionaries of whom the Church might be justly proud. They are the best memorials of Keshub Chunder Sen's work. But in another view his ill-success was also singular. With all the many good qualities which the Brahmo missionaries acquired, they failed to distinguish themselves in some of the all-important virtues enumerated here, and their chief failure was in the virtue of mutual love and toleration. It is premature to say how their mutual disagreement affected themselves and their leader, but it is an undoubted fact that even at the time we are speaking of he was exceedingly anxious, and often deeply alarmed at the hostile and disintegrating elements around him. This part of the subject is painful to dwell upon, but, unfortunately, it will be necessary now and then to refer to it in elucidating certain important matters towards the close of Keshub Chunder Sen's career on earth.

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CHAPTER X.

TRIALS AND PERSECUTIONS.

The Cooch Behar Marriage, 1878.

A separate chapter is allotted to the Cooch Behar Marriage, not because we mean to rediscuss its incidents, but only because it formed the great turning point of Keshub Chunder Sen's career.

In August and September 1877, when the present writer was in Bombay, letters were written to him both by the Brahmo leader himself, and other friends, that negotiations had been most unexpectedly opened by the Government of Bengal for the marriage of his eldest daughter Sunity Devi to the young enlightened Maharaja of Cooch Behar Nripendra Narayan. The youthful prince, left under the guardianship of the Government by the untimely death of his father, had been carefully educated by English tutors, and his official guardians determined that he should marry a girl who was somewhat his equal, both in knowledge and refinement. The Cooch Behar dynasty was not particularly fettered by caste restrictions, and a suitable match was sought for the prince in every part of the country. At last the authorities thought Keshub Chunder Sen's daughter would serve the purpose very well, and the proposal was accordingly made. Directly we heard of it, we naturally rejoiced both for the sake of the young couple and the family of the Minister, but it had not the same effect upon every one of Keshub's friends. A great number of them feared the prospects of the Brahmo Somaj would be greatly injured by such an alliance. Many felt a strong repulsion at the very mention of the match; some, we are afraid, out of personal jealousy, but others no doubt out of honourable and conscientious motives. Amongst these were a number of Keshub's English friends, who anticipated the report would affect his reputation in their part of the world. The negotiations in the meanwhile advanced and receded, and seemed at last to have broken off altogether. With the commencement of the new year (1878), they began again, and by the close of the proceedings of our anniversary festival, in the beginning of February, took the form of a definite settlement. As soon as this was known,

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the most vigorous protests began to pour in from Brahmos, both of Calcutta and outside. The protests were based mainly upon the following grounds:—There was the marriage law passed by the Government, Act III of 1872, popularly known as the Brahmo Marriage Act, mainly by the exertions, as the reader knows, of Keshub himself, for the legalisation of advanced unidolatrous marriages, such as the Brahmo Somaj had introduced. This law, which was meant to do away, among other things, with child-marriages, had fixed the marriageable age of girls at the completion of fourteen, and of men at the completion of eighteen years. These ages were set down as the average minimum after much medical advice and general discussion. The protestors took exception to the proposed marriage, firstly, because it was not to be celebrated according to this Marriage Act of the Brahmo Somaj; and secondly, because the girl was under her fourteenth year, and the Maharaja was not yet sixteen. In the third place, they feared that idolatrous, or at all events, untheistic rites and ceremonies were likely to be introduced. They also pointed out that the Maharaja not being a Brahmo, should not marry the daughter of the Brahmo leader, and they argued that as the custom of polygamy was long in use in the royal family of Cooch Behar, the proposed marriage, being independent of the provisions of the Act, gave no guarantee against the repetition of that evil. These were the arguments of the protestors soberly put, and it is impossible to deny there was rational ground for the alarm felt. But unfortunately they did not confine themselves to this. As the controversy grew hot, in various letters, remonstrances, and especially in newspapers, various bitter accusations, and violent charges were made against Keshub, which provoked angry retorts by his friends. And thus the work of mutual vilification went on with increasing rage, till the time approached for the marriage to take place. Keshub did not read the protests, did not give any explanations, far less make any replies, but he repeatedly said that if any other person did what he was doing, he would undoubtedly protest with vigour. This showed that the abstract justice of the the protests he admitted, while in his own case he claimed exceptional consideration at the hands of the Brahmo public. He felt, however, that a very formidable public opinion was slowly forming against the step he was about to take. This made him careful to demand conditions and safeguards from the Government which would effectually protect the marriage from the evils apprehended. So at the very commencement

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of the negotiations he insisted mainly on the following four conditions:—(1) The Maharaja must acknowledge in writing that he is a Brahmo or Theist. (2) The marriage must be celebrated according to the ritual of the Brahmo Somaj, that is, Hindu rites divested of idolatry, though such local customs might be supplemented as were unidolatrous. (3) The marriage is to be celebrated when the bridegroom and the bride attain their full majority. But if it could not be deferred till then, for the present there might be a *formal betrothal only*, the due consummation of marriage being put off until the return of the Maharaja from Europe, whither, it was arranged, he should proceed immediately after the marriage. (4) All the Theistic conditions as to marriage rites must be strictly observed; but on other points where local customs of a simply unreasonable or absurd nature were insisted upon, these might be tolerated. These conditions, which were readily acceded to, it would be seen, met all the important objections which the protestors raised. As for the difficulty of polygamy on the part of the Maharaja, no fear of it was at all entertained, because he was himself an enlightened and educated Theist, and because a great Christian Government undertook to solemnise the marriage on his behalf. The marriage was fixed to take place on the 6th March. Government assured the Brahmo leader that though the wedding rites were to be performed, the marriage was to be nothing but *"a formal betrothal,"* to be consummated after the Maharaja returned from Europe, and the parties attained their full majority; that in fact even the wedding rites would have been deferred till then, but as the Maharaja must proceed to England to complete his education, it was not desirable, for political reasons, to let him go on such a distant journey unmarried. Keshub was also assured that no ceremonies but such as were thoroughly expurgated from idolatry, were to be allowed at the marriage. In the meantime the Maharaja in the presence of independent witnesses signed a paper declaring that he was a Theist, and every arrangement seemed to progress satisfactorily. The principal *Pandit* of the Cooch Behar Court was deputed to Calcutta to settle in detail the ceremonies to be adopted at the time of marriage in consultation with Keshub himself, and the *Pandits* on his side, and this part of the negotiations was also gone through without any difficulty.

The arrangement was this: There was to be a Brahmo Divine Service; a few essential Brahmo rites such as "consent" (*Sammati*), "marriage vows" (*Udvaha Pratijna*), and "prayer"

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(*Prarthana*); and also a few Hindu rites, minus idolatry. These rites, however, and the accompanying Sanskrit recitations (*Mantras*) were to be settled beforehand. A description of the rites was subsequently printed, and each party had a copy to be used at the time of the wedding. To this was attached a supplementary sheet distinctly stipulating (1) that neither the bridegroom nor the bride was to take part in any idolatrous ceremony before, during, or after the marriage; (2) at the place of marriage no god or goddess, no fire, no *Ghot* (sacred vessel) was to be kept; (3) those *mantras* (recitations) only which were printed on the programme of the marriage ritual could be read, no other *mantras* could be allowed; and (4) no part of the *mantras* could be omitted or modified. This was making assurance doubly sure, and as both the agent of the Government, and the deputed chief *Pandit* from Cooch Behar, cordially consented to the settlement, every fear in Keshub's mind was set at rest. The bridegroom and bride had more than one interview, natural feelings of affection sprang up; morally and materially the marriage was a certainty. The opponents of the marriage, however, kept energetically repeating their objections and predicting the defeat of Brahmo Somaj principles at the time of the celebration. The settlement of rites took place about the 21st February; the chief *Pandit* and the Maharaja departed for Cooch Behar with the paper fully describing them on the 22nd; and Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, with his daughter and friends, was preparing to leave Calcutta on Monday, the 25th. On Saturday night, however, a telegram came from Cooch Behar to the effect that Brahmo ceremonies had been introduced into the marriage ritual, and this would not be allowed. Another message to the same purport came a short time before the bride's party left for Cooch Behar on the 25th. Keshub despatched a protest against these messages, drawing attention to the marriage conditions previously settled in consultation both with the accredited agents of the Cooch Behar Raj, and the Government of Bengal. But misgivings were for the first time felt, and an inquiry was made whether the special train by which the bridal party was to leave for Cooch Behar could not be stopped. No, it could not be. And Keshub left Calcutta with his daughter and friends on the 25th February. Why did he do this in the face of the unfavourable messages and misgivings? Another man with a deeper experience of the ways of Native States, and official irregularities, would not perhaps have ventured into the enemy's camp so precipitately; Keshub's great natural sagacity

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ought to have warned and deterred him. Unfortunately, it must be added, Keshub did not act sagaciously here. But there was one trait of his nature his critics never cared to recognise. Where he discerned the purpose of Providence, this seer of human nature, this shrewd careful man became supple and submissive like a child, and his faith in every one who took part in that purpose became unquestioning. From the beginning, Keshub had seen the hand of God in this affair. "The spontaneity of the Government offer" he wrote, "and its wholly unexpected character, the prospect of influencing for good a large population, an entire Native State, mutual approval of the parties, the noble character of the Maharaja, all serve to confirm my conviction that the match was really providential." It is, we personally know, true that though his daughter was growing up, he had never made any attempt to seek a match; that the present offer came to him entirely unsought; that when for a while it seemed to break off, he never cared for its renewal. When Government pressed it again, for weeks together he would not make any definite reply, so that his protracted hesitation caused great impatience to the official deputed by the authorities to secure his consent. He was constantly communing with his conscience (we know conscience at all times meant with him the Voice of God) whether or not to give his sanction. When, after all, he got the response he waited for, he unreservedly expressed his agreement in the proposal, likewise putting his faith in the agencies employed to carry it out. Relying, therefore, upon the repeated assurances given by the Government, upon the purity of his own motives, upon the righteousness of the cause, and upon the approval of the Inner Voice, he left for Cooch Behar, against the warnings of worldly prudence. If the telegraphic messages had created misgivings, the reception of the bridal party at Cooch Behar confirmed them. They were coldly and informally received, and when the question of ceremonies was raised for discussion, no one paid any attention to it. The Cooch Behar authorities apparently felt that once entrapped into their metropolis Babu Keshub Chunder Sen was at their mercy. The marriage had been appointed to take place on Wednesday, the 6th March. On Monday, the 4th, a number of persons, deputed for the purpose, came to the bridal quarters, and proposed material alterations in the marriage rites settled before, which greatly astonished Keshub and his friends. There was a strong and painful controversy. Of course he stoutly declined to accede to the new proposals. On Tuesday, a certain ceremony called *Adhibas* was to be per-

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formed which required the removal of the bride into the palace. This also meant that Keshub's daughter was to be kept in the custody of the palace authorities until the actual marriage ceremonies were performed on the next day. Keshub unfortunately gave his consent to the arrangement which involved him still further, and put him almost entirely in the power of the Cooch Behar officials.

The question again comes why he consented to part with his daughter when he knew the marriage rites were the subject of bitter dispute? His faith only must answer that question. He believed that morally the marriage had already taken place when the boy and the girl elected one another as husband and wife after repeated interviews ; when presents were exchanged ; when the bond of betrothal was written out ; when all the prominent men of Calcutta society were invited, and came to bless the would-be bridegroom and bride. He fervently believed also that the representatives of the British Government could never deceive him. It is indeed true that when the marriage proposals in their altered form came to him in Cooch Behar, he was astounded, and his mind was disabused of a good deal of its misplaced confidence. But, nevertheless, he hoped against hope, obstinately trusted that all would be right in the end, and under the impulse of that hope and trust did what he conceived to be his duty at the time. He struggled hard at every point when the difficulties arose, but did not succeed to the extent he expected, because the odds were too great against him. The circumstances under which he had allowed himself to be placed, continually robbed him more and more of the power of resistance. He felt he had been caught in a snare, and it was too late to retrieve his position wholly. He tried to make the best of a bad case.

In the midst of these mental conflicts at last the marriage day arrived. Nothing about the rites had yet been settled. The ladies of the Cooch Behar palace insisted that the ceremony of *Hom* (fire-worship) should be performed, that no Brahmo service at the scene of marriage was to be allowed, that no marriage vows should be taken, and that non-Brahmins, including even Keshub himself, should be excluded from the place of marriage. Keshub of course could never accede to these conditions, so hour after hour was spent in fruitless disputations, and nobody knew what the result of it was to be, whether indeed the marriage was going to take place at all, till at about midnight the concession was made that the bride's party only might take no part in idolatrous ceremonies.

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Keshub was in a state so unusual with him, so absolutely helpless, so abjectly despondent during these hours, that he at once and eagerly accepted this concession as far as it went, and seemed content to escape barely with the observance of his principles. But he was little prepared for what awaited him at the scene of marriage. The sacred vessels, *ghots*, which he had tried to exclude by his supplementary conditions, were there; and even two still more obnoxious symbols were there. Of course these were not worshipped, nor meant for worship, but their presence was not agreeable to theistic eyes. Protests were made, but to no purpose. The Brahmo service when attempted was drowned by the deafening peal of innumerable *tom-toms*. Keshub and non-Brahmin priests on his side were, however, allowed to preside over the ceremonies. The marriage vows were not allowed to be taken at the scene of marriage, but were taken afterwards. *Hom* or the ceremony of fire-worship was not performed by Keshub's daughter, but by the Maharaja. The theistic character of the marriage was very much marred, almost every Brahmo present was deeply mortified. But there was some comfort in the thought that the Hindu character of the marriage, the character which the officials meant to give it, was also gone. The presence of non-Brahmin priests officiating at the ceremony was surely un-Hindu; the bride leaving the scene at the time of the worship of fire was equally un-Hindu. The fact is the marriage ceremonies, in the form they took place, gave satisfaction to no party, neither to the friends of the Cooch Behar family, nor to the friends of Keshub Chunder Sen. The Deputy Commissioner of Cooch Behar, nevertheless, as representative of the British Government, wrote to the papers declaring the marriage to be a Hindu marriage. Though unwarranted by facts, this was an official report, and the public in general accepted it as such. The Maharaja's people in securing an eligible and high-caste bride, however, soon forgot their embarrassment. As for Keshub, his position already compromised, his real troubles began after the marriage was over. Never in his life had he been so discomfited and outwitted before. He could not but feel that even many of his dearest friends were most seriously offended. The pathos and pain of his appeals to Heaven on the next morning were most piercing. The only party who exulted at these unfortunate results were Kshub's opponents in the Brahmo Somaj. Their evil predictions were partly fulfilled, and they made many more predictions of the

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same kind. They exaggerated and caricatured what had actually taken place, they invented things which had never taken place, and the bitterness and violence with which some of them assailed Keshub's motives was simply disgraceful. A large number of protesting Brahmos in Calcutta called for public meetings to expel Keshub from his position as Secretary to the Brahmo Somaj of India, and as Minister to the *Brahma Mandir*. To a nature so sensitive and self-conscious as that of Keshub, such proposals carried a poignance of pain that can be better imagined than described. Though counter-requistions from his own friends demanded that no meetings of the kind should be held, Keshub judged it best after much thought to call together the worshippers of the *Brahma Mandir* to consider the question of his deposition.

A meeting of the congregation was accordingly called on March 21st, Thursday, to elect a new minister. The proceedings were violent, disorderly, almost riotous, and Keshub's opponents went away with the impression that they had carried their point. His friends, however, went away with a different impression, namely, that no resolution could be arrived at amidst the hopeless disorder of the proceedings from which they retired in a body. Nevertheless, the Minister thought that when a portion of the members of the congregation did not want his ministrations, and considered him morally unworthy, he should vacate his post. With great agony of mind, therefore, he expressed his wish to resign, but so many worshippers of the *Mandir* insisted upon his retaining his place that he was obliged to reconsider his decision and continue in the ministry. The Sunday following witnessed another disgraceful scene. Under the impression that they had lawfully deposed the present minister and secretary, Keshub's opponents thought they had a right to take possession of the building of the *Brahma Mandir*. They, therefore, concerted a plan of going in a body on Sunday morning, and of making themselves the masters of the premises. Keshub and his friends, however, had got an intimation of these wishes beforehand, and stationed a number of their adherents on the *Brahma Mandir* building, who, as soon as the protesting party appeared in view, sent for the assistance of the police who drove away the assailants. The whole day, and up to late in the night, these obnoxious tactics had to be kept up on both sides, till the protestors, tired out by the persistent opposition, left the field in despair and disgust. This made both sides wild and reckless, and the vilifications

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were worse than before. The protesting Brahmos established a rival prayer-meeting in the neighbourhood, and the next serious step they meditated was the organisation of a new Brahmo Somaj with an impersonal constitution, in which no single individual should have any marked ascendancy. For this purpose they convened a public meeting in the Town Hall on the 14th May. Keshub felt this would be a dangerous step, as it would necessitate another schism in the Brahmo Somaj, the consequences of which it was impossible to foresee. He caused a calm and thoughtful remonstrance to be written, showing the universality of catholic Theism, and the all-comprehensive and progressive constitution of the Brahmo Somaj of India. "The Brahmo Somaj of India," it was said, "is an all—inclusive church, which excludes none because of immaterial differences of opinion, even the 'conservative' section of the Brahmo community belonging to the Calcutta Somaj is included in its wider organisation. It comprises in its comprehensive membership the widest diversities of opinion and belief, extreme conservatism and extreme radicalism, the Hindu monotheist and the English theist. Should any body of its members on any plea, however plausible, attempt to secede and form a sect, they will nevertheless be regarded by the parent Somaj as still forming a part of the body corporate and their differences will be tolerated without reservation, and their independence fully respected. A schism, in the true sense of the word, in the sense of sectarian exclusiveness, in the sense of doctrinal disunion, is a moral impossibility in the present case." No attention was however, paid to the remonstrance, and the *Sadharan Somaj* was formally organised. In the meantime, ill-feelings were every day becoming more intense. Scurrilous and filthy pamphlets were published reflecting grossly upon the moral character of the Brahmo leaders and their families; Keshub's enemies even went so far as to write anonymous letters to the Government authorities accusing him of misappropriating the funds of the Cooch Behar treasury. Police detectives were set upon his track, but these men reported to their heads, after careful and secret inquiry, that the charges were unfounded.

Keshub was exceedingly calm under these persecutions. He often said that posterity would do him justice. What justice then may he expect from posterity? In the first place, his motives were beyond any impulse of wordly ambition; his whole previous and subsequent character has belied such a supposition. He undoubtedly foresaw his daughter's

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position and prosperity, but that consideration alone never influenced him. He foresaw also the prospects which such an alliance would open to the public cause he advocated. The assurances from a great Government which guaranteed the theistic character of the marriage were such as he was bound to accept. An independent Native prince joining the Brahmo Somaj, what beneficent effects might not have produced among the thousands under his rule! But above every such calculation was the voice of his Conscience, which to him was the veritable Commandment of God. That those assurances were not fully kept was a misfortune, and though the misfortune seemed to cast a shadow upon his conduct, Keshub's motives to any one who would examine them closely, were pure and honourable from beginning to end. Certainly the Cooch Behar marriage was not a model Brahmo marriage. Keshub never claimed that credit for it. All that he claimed was the marriage was suffered to take place under exceptional circumstances, throughout which he earnestly struggled to do his duty. It would, undoubtedly, have been better if his daughter had not gone through these nominal marriage ceremonies till she had completed her fourteenth year, the minimum marriageable age for Brahmo girls, but the moral condition of this custom was most strictly and faithfully kept on both sides, and the marriage was observed as nothing but "a formal betrothal," till its consummation three years later, on the 20th October 1880, before a large and mixed assembly in the *Brahma Mandir*. Up to this time, Keshub's daughter lived in his house as she had done before the 6th March, 1878. It would have been better if the marriage had been celebrated under the Act III of 1872. But that was impossible because the Maharaja was an independent ruler, and in his territories this law would not be binding. Its moral provision, so far as the prevention of child marriage was concerned, was in spirit and performance rigidly respected. Its formal and literal rejection was necessitated by circumstances which carry their own justification, though even for this formal irregularity Keshub suffered very much more than was his due. That the Maharaja is a Brahmo, an educated high-minded gentleman, has been sufficiently proved, during all these years. If the marriage rites had been allowed to be as pure and irreproachable as Keshub wanted and stipulated for, the real character of the alliance would have come out much better. But the Cooch Behar officials after making all the arrangements they could to conciliate the principles of Babu Keshub

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Chunder Sen, discovered they had gone too far, and then at the eleventh hour attempted to impress an orthodox Hindu character upon the transaction. The irregularities caused by such conduct which, under the circumstances, Keshub was powerless to check, gave a questionable aspect to the entire marriage. How far Keshub consciously participated in these irregularities, or tolerated them, or relaxed any effort even to the last moment to combat them, is the question which really concerns his reputation. It is ridiculous to imagine that he could control the other party; but on his own side he did his best to keep his ideal untainted. If that is conceded, his memory is vindicated sufficiently. The deficiencies of the marriage were admitted by himself and his Church. All the rest lies in the hands of the illustrious couple, to effect whose union Keshub Chunder Sen sacrificed a good deal of what was dearest and most precious to him on earth, perhaps even his life itself. He had warm anticipations, and enthusiastic hopes of the results of this providential alliance. He strained every energy of his overworked life to ward off its predicated evils, to make it a blessing to his Church and his nation. And now that he has sunk under these efforts, let us hope and trust the Maharaja and the Maharani will co-operate to make his hopes a reality. A Church of the New Dispensation has been established in Cooch Behar, and a resident Brahmo Missionary has been retained. A College for Native ladies* has been established in Calcutta by the Maharani who takes personal interest in it. His Highness the Maharaja has established a College† for young men at Cooch Behar, he has also established on a permanent footing the India Club, the most successful institution of its kind in the land, where Native gentlemen of all classes enjoy social intercourse with each other and sometimes with the members of the ruling race also. Institutions of public usefulness like these, to be followed, let us hope by many more, prove every day that the Cooch Behar marriage, somewhat imperfect in its mode of celebration, was appointed and consummated in the wisdom of that Providence Who, through great events, perfects the destiny of lands and nations.

*"Victoria Institution for girls."
†"Victoria College."

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NOTE :—

For more detailed accounts, references may be made to the following books :—

(1) *Keshub Charita* in Bengalee. By *Sangitacharya* Troilakya Nath Sanyal.

(2) *Acharya Keshub Chandra* in Bengalee: By *Upadhaya* Gour Govinda Roy.

(3) Keshub Chunder Sen. By Mr. Gouri Prosad Mozoomdar.

(4) Behold the Man. By Prof. Dwijadas Dutt.

(5) Keshub as seen by his opponents. By Mr. G. C. Bannerji.

(6) Autobiography of an Indian Princess. By Maharani Sunity Devi, C.I.

We understand that an up-to-date history of the *Cooch Behar Raj* is in preparation by the State itself.

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CHAPTER XI.

THE NEW DISPENSATION.*

Its Purposes, Doctrines, and Ceremonies, 1879-1883.

The cruel persecutions, which followed Keshub as the immediate results of the Cooch Behar marriage in 1878, produced a depression of mind which he did not care to express. But it preyed upon his spirits none the less, so that towards autumn of the same year he fell violently ill, so much so that we became seriously alarmed about his life. In the delirium of the brain fever which prostrated him, he talked wildly of the dangers to his Church, the bitter animosities and ill-treatments which dogged him, and there was no doubt that both physically and mentally he was pierced with pain at the conduct of those who had deserted him. But with careful treatment, river tours, and a suburban change, he soon rallied. And with returning health, his spirits and courage came back with renewed vigor. While still in a state of convalescence, he permitted himself to be led into long and exciting conversations on the future of Indian Theism, as affected by the establishment of the *Sadharan Somaj*, and the dissensions which followed that event. One evening while Keshub lay in bed, and we had proceeded far into the excitement of such a talk, he suddenly got up and said there must be a great and unprecedented *Revival*, if the Brahmo Somaj is to tide over the present crisis. In devotions, disciplines, doctrines, and missionary activities, there should be introduced, all along the line, such a spirit of *Revival* as had never yet been seen. We all concurred in the idea, but we did not perceive that what Keshub said was the result of long intense premeditation, and much earnest prayer, that it boded a kind of activity for which no one was prepared.

The grand idea that the religion of the Brahmo Somaj was a New Dispensation of God to India had forcibly occurred to him already with much inner light. In successive sermons to his congregation in 1874, and even earlier, he had elucidated the principles by which Providence made such revela-

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tions to different ages and races. These he summed up in his anniversary sermon in 1875 on "Behold the Light of Heaven in India."* "The light of a New Dispensation," said he, "is vouchsafed by Providence for India's salvation." He defined a Dispensation to mean "God's saving mercy adapting itself in a special manner to the requirements of special epochs in the world's history. True it is that the Universal Father loves all His children alike, but He does not deal with all of them alike. In various ways does He deal with different nations, communities and individuals to bring about their salvation. . . . . How strikingly had the Lord been dealing with our degraded nation during the last hundred years, and adopting marvellous means and agencies to elevate its social and moral condition. They constitute, therefore, a special Dispensation of mercy to the Indian race. These special dispensations of Providence differ according to the peculiarities of each race, but they never jar with each other. They cannot clash though apparently dissimilar. . . . What I accept as New Dispensation in India neither shuts out God's light from the rest of the world, nor does it run counter to any of those marvellous dispensations of His mercy which were made in ancient times." "The light of Heaven," he concludes "has dawned upon our Fatherland. May we labour and pray so that the light may shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, and bring joy, and peace, and salvation into the homes of all men in this land." Now he meditated to make this Light of Heaven the guide in the onward path of his drooping Church. In January 1876, he said "I plainly tell you we do not mean to stand where we are. What the Lord will reveal to us ten years hence who knows save He?" And in two years more it was revealed to him to take his stand upon the truth that the Theism of the Brahmo Somaj, both in its past history, and future prospect, was the New Dispensation of God in India. All the cultures, disciplines, classifications, and growths through which his movement had passed for the last twelve years, had confirmed this conviction in his mind. He had secretly felt this for a long time, he had directly or indirectly expressed it to his friends, but hitherto he thought the time had not come to give public utterance to it. The rigor of persecution and the wide divisions which followed the Cooch Behar marriage made him feel that the time had now come when he should make a full avowal of his long-cherished

*Lectures in India.

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belief. This Theism then, which, under his leadership, had developed itself in the Brahmo Somaj, was to his mind the Divine Dispensation of the age, and must bring about a complete revival of social and spiritual life in modern India.

When, therefore, Keshub spoke of a *Revival* in 1878, he meant a further advance, a greater advance than had been ever made before, on the lines of a new revelation, a new life, altogether a new departure. He felt that the tendency of a large body of men in the Brahmo Somaj had been for a long time to dissociate themselves from him. These were now chiefly the protesting Brahmos, who judged his conduct and his principles in relation to the Cooch Behar marriage in a hostile, hypercritical spirit. He felt he had completely failed to carry the whole Brahmo Somaj with him in this matter. And he determined to give his part of the movement a unique character by accentuating the principles of faith and culture, which had been pursued by him and his friends for many years previously. He felt perfectly well—assured that the higher truths and spiritualities upon which he had lived, and taught his followers to live, would in the end leaven the whole Brahmo Somaj, and the *Revival* which he contemplated, would in time be the regeneration of the entire Theistic Church of India. And thus, henceforth, the idea of the New Dispensation became the burden of all his teaching and action. Keshub of late had not been very fond of the name Brahmo Somaj. Inasmuch as he felt his faith to be new, he did not care whether he retained or gave up the old name, though perhaps historically he felt its importance. "The Brahmo name," says he in his lecture on "Our Faith and Experiences," in 1876, "is perfectly immaterial. Verily there is no fascination in that name. I myself would at this very moment disclaim it, if necessary." In fact Keshub felt his movement was a development from the Brahmo Somaj. Though, never objecting to retain that name, he meant to characterise his church as the Church of the New Dispensation.*

The various developments that crowded into the history of the Brahmo Somaj of India since 1879 under the name of the New Dispensation, did not in any sense disturb the continuity of the principles which had for more than a decade characterised the Theistic movement as led by Keshub Chunder Sen. The purposes of his Church remained unaltered, only the methods taken to carry out those purposes, and the

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impulses that suggested those methods, changed considerably. We have repeatedly tried to show that Keshub's object from the time we joined the Brahmo Somaj was to find, and to preach "a religion of life." The very first principle of this religion of life was the acceptance of a living God, and living relations with him. "The Lord is in our midst," says he, "not as a dead Diety, but as a living God of Providence." "Here you see God's special providence working out the redemption of the land, through the instrumentality of a complete dispensation, with its full complement of apostles, scriptures, and inspiration." His primary purpose, therefore, was that his Church should acquire the highest order of spiritual relations with the living God of Providence, and be filled and guided by His breath in every duty, and in every undertaking. With this view he had introduced the *Brahmotsab* or devotional festival in 1867; with this view he had introduced the *Yoga* and *Bhakti* developments in 1876; for this purpose he had insisted so strongly upon the doctrines which will be presently explained. He felt at this time he had a most important duty to perform, namely, to interpret his sublime faith to his nation, to the masses of the great community that looked up to him for teaching and guidance. He felt he must establish a *National Religion*.

His next purpose, almost equally important, was the formation of apostolic standards of moral and devotional life. Upon himself and his immediate disciples he looked as the medium through which the special ideas of his divine doctrine should find utterance among the people. With this view he had established the Brahmo Somaj Mission Office in 1866, and elaborated the rules of a life of strict self-sacrifice and faith, every one of which he had practically followed himself, and meant his associates to follow. He rigidly adhered to the precept of "think not for the morrow;" he boldly preached the doctrine of asceticism against every unpopularity; he took himself, and encouraged others to take the vow of personal poverty. He never hesitated to claim on his own behalf, and on behalf of the apostles of his Church, the supreme gift of Inspiration, in the general and special duties of their lives. In 1872, he founded the *Bharat Asram* in which the managers and leaders of the institution were directed in every detail of management to wait for the voice of God. And this principle of management created an opposition out of which no end of trouble, including even a painful lawsuit, arose. In 1876, he introduced the classification of devotees,

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each order of whom had to go through rigid disciplines, and adopt primitive regulations about eating, cooking, sleeping, clothes, carpets, and various other details of life. We have described their occupations in the little garden, known as *Sadhan Kanan*. "Look at these helpless souls," says he in one of his lectures, "with their families, men, women, children, living from day to day, upon mere alms, and precarious contributions. They have no certain means of subsistence whereby to support themselves. They have taken the vow of poverty, which interdicts money-making and self-support. They take no thought for the morrow, what they shall eat, or what they shall put on. The Lord gives to each his daily bread. Each day brings the bare necessaries of life. The morrow is entirely dark. Indeed it is a mystery and a marvel how so many mouths are fed daily. And yet for fifteen years we have managed to go on, not stumbling, not starving. . . . Verily it is the living *Jehovah* who feeds us, His poor, but trusting apostles, with the bread of life. He sustains the body, He inspires the soul." This indeed had gone on for fifteen years. But Keshub felt that the time had come to raise these men to what he judged their natural position, as the lights of the land, the city set on a hill that cannot be hid. He meant that their example, their life, their devotions, their unity and mutual love would form the foundations upon which to build this structure of the new religion of life, this future national faith of "The New Dispensation."

In the third place, as the Brahmo Somaj of India began its career in a harmony of scriptures, by publishing texts from the sacred books of all religions, in 1866, under the name of the *Sloka Sangraha*, and in a harmony of prophets through the two well-known lectures by the leader on Jesus Christ, and Great Men, so in the progress of that Church it was his purpose to complete the reconciliation of religions. Eclecticism had been the philosophy and faith of the Brahmo Somaj ever since the giving up of the Hindu Scriptures as infallible, about the year 1850. Keshub inherited that position when he entered the institution ten years later, and did all he could to confirm it by his studies, lectures, labours, and reforms. But in spite of all these eclectic professions, the Brahmo Somaj, under Devendra Nath Tagore, practically retained its purely Hindu character. When Keshub started on his independent career in 1866, he not only determined that the universality of modern Hindu Theism in the Brahmo movement should be a reality, but that it should form the ground-work of all

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spiritual culture in that Church. The problems of comparative theology, which the savants of the West have attempted to solve during the last quarter of a century by research and philosophy, he tried to solve by devotional fervor, intense meditation, spiritual discipline, and moral culture. To Keshub, the harmony of religions was the great mission of Brahmo Somaj. The whole cause of modern Theism, as symbolised by the Church of the New Dispensation, was thus described by him in the *Flag-Ceremony* (*Nishan Varan*) held during the anniversary festival of 1881. "Behold the Flag of the New Dispensation! The silken flag is crimson with the blood of martyrs. It is the Flag of the Great King of Heaven and Earth, the One Supreme Lord. . . Behold the spirits of all the prophets and saints of heaven assembled overhead, a holy confraternity in whose union is the harmony of faith, hope, and joy. And at the foot of the holy standard are the scriptures of the Hindus, Christians, Mahomedans, and Buddhists, the sacred repositories of the wisdom of ages, and the inspiration of saints, our light, and our guide. Four scriptures are here united in blessed harmony, under the shadow of this flag. Here is put together the international fellowship of Asia, Europe, Africa, and America. . . . Here is the harmony of the mind and the heart, the soul and the will, of knowledge and love, of devotion and duty. Glory unto God in the highest! Honor to all prophets and saints in heaven, and to all scriptures on earth! Unto the New Dispensation, victory!" With him the harmony of religions meant the harmony of doctrines, of scriptures, of prophets, and of cultures. It meant a common faith for all mankind. His object was to lay the foundation of a *Universal Church* upon the ground of essential unity among all religions.

These in fact were the chief purposes of the new revival, purposes which had at all times inspired the labours of the Brahmo Somaj. But eclecticism, whether as a philosophy, or as a religion, appeals to the mind of those who have made some advancement in intellectual processes. Keshub's object, on the other hand, was that the ideal of his Church should be the personal ideal of each individual member of his community. He meant that the New Dispensation should have for its basis not merely the opinions, but, in a much larger measure, the heart, the spirit, the faith and character of his fellow-believers. To make that a fact he began his new course of work.

All this, it will be readily perceived, brought him face to face with tremendous difficulties. Was the Brahmo Somaj,

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into which he had entered under the leadership of Devendra Nath Tagore, capable of representing the spiritual instincts and aspirations of the great people of India? He answered in the negative. He was too intensely conscious of the truth of the remark that no metaphysical religion would ever answer the religious necessities of the masses of the Indian people. The Brahmo Somaj was not a popular church, its religion was not a national religion, and its doctrines and devotions were not calculated to interest and emancipate the simple, unrefined nature of the millions of ignorant Hindus. What must they have for their satisfaction? Polytheism and idolatry? No; monotheism certainly, but so simplified, so symbolised, so transformed through processes of imaginative illustration, that the people might naturally feel it to be akin to their national usages, and modes of faith and worship. Nor did he want that the religious food thus administered should be the product of Indian tradition only. The future Hindu Church must combine in itself the essence of the teachings of the East and West alike. In Keshub's ideal of a National Church, the religion of Christ composed a very large element, nay, more than half the substance. He meant to have a National Church which would embody in itself all the principles of the modern life of the people of India, yet based upon a simple creed, a simple ritual, a simple law of life. In his lecture on the "Future Church," delivered so early as 1869, after speaking of the simple creed, gospel, and worship of such a Church, he concludes thus:—"The future church of India must be thoroughly national, the future religion of the world I have described will be a common religion of all nations, but in each nation it will have an indigenous growth, and assume a distinctive character. All mankind will unite in a Universal Church, at the same time it will be adapted to the peculiar circumstances of each nation, and assume a national form. No country will borrow, or mechanically imitate the religion of another country. India has religious customs and traditions, tastes and associations, peculiarly sacred and dear to her and it is idle to expect she will forego these: nay, she cannot do so, as they are interwoven with her very life. We shall see that the future church is not thrust upon us, but that we independently and naturally grow into it; that it does not come to us a foreign plant, but strikes its root deep in the national heart of India, draws its sap from our national resources, and develops itself with all the freshness and vigour of indigenous growth. There shall, in short,

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be unity of spirit, but diversity of forms. Thus India shall sing the glory of the supreme Lord with Indian voice, and with Indian accompaniments, and so shall England, and America, and the various races and tribes of the world; but all their different voices and peculiar modes of chanting shall commingle in one sweet, swelling chorus—one universal anthem proclaiming in solemn, stirring notes, in the world below and the heavens above, the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man."

These then were the three great purposes of the various developments of the New Dispensation:—(1) A *National Religion*: (2) A *Universal Religion*: (3) An *Apostolical Religion*. There was a clear continuity in the history of that peculiar Theism which he brought with him when he entered the Brahmo Somaj, and which he developed into the Church of the New Dispensation. Those, therefore, who argue that the New Dispensation was a manufacture and make-shift to cover the consequences of the Cooch Behar marriage, do so either in great ignorance, or with very unworthy motives. The whole idea of the New Dispensation was fully conceived, named, and elucidated, in Keshub's anniversary lecture on "Behold the Light of Heaven,"* nearly three years before the Cooch Behar marriage was dreamt of. It may be argued with better reason that some, certainly not all, of those methods which characterised the Church of the New Dispensation after its formal announcement, were subsequent to the Cooch Behar marriage. These methods were peculiar to a period of revival, and we have seen that after the depression which followed the establishment of the *Sadharan Brahmo Somaj*, Keshub did mean to bring about an unprecedented revival. How far he meant to perpetuate these methods, we will not discuss now, but as we proceed. We fervently believe he did not mean to perpetuate them. But it is time once for all to distinguish between the permanent principles which formed the essential characteristics of Keshub Chunder Sen's religious genius, and the forms, accidents, vehicles, and local means through which he laboured latterly to convey these to his emotional and imaginative race. We want to draw notice to this distinction because a thorough understanding of it alone can enable any one to understand the apparently eccentric developments of the New Dispensation. Apparently eccentric, but in reality meant to popularise the purposes of

*Lectures in India.

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his universal religion of harmony for the acceptance of the nation, and the establishment of the future Church of Hinduism.

The storm of opposition which raged through the whole of the year 1878, forced upon Keshub in the beginning of the next year the duty of giving a strong exposition of his personal claims upon the credence and confidence of the impartial public. Perhaps the strongest, certainly the most extensive objection taken to his attitude during the marriage controversy was the plea of *Adesh*, or commandment of God, under which he professed to have consented to the Cooch Behar marriage. Even those, who did not care to find fault with the marriage itself, protested against this doctrine of divine inspiration in the ordinary emergencies of life. He was charged with theocratic pretensions, with the ambition of setting himself up as a divine guide, as one equal to Jesus, and St. Paul. He was charged with maintaining that supernatural sanction might be obtained for acts of questionable morality.

The hostility against his daughter's marriage had already roused Keshub's nature, and now the hostility against his favourite doctrine of *Adesh* roused him to intense excitement. He felt that a powerful stand was required to be made in the interests of spiritual religion, of holy impulses, of prayer to God, and the response of that prayer from God to man. If the idea of a great *Revival* had occurred to him before as the dictate of the Divine Spirit, it occurred to him now much more forcibly that the possibility and necessity of such dictates should be vindicated. The first definite claim put forward, the first doctrine definitely announced upon which the New Dispensation reared itself was, therefore, the doctrine of *Inspiration*. In his lecture on the subject, Keshub defines Inspiration to be "the fire of divine life as a response to man's earnest prayers." "Prayer and inspiration are the two ends of the axis around which man's spiritual life revolves. They are only two sides of the same act." In the lecture on "Am I an Inspired Prophet?"* he most emphatically disclaimed the pretensions of a prophet, but as emphatically maintained his claim to receive inspiration. "I am commissioned to preach certain truths." "In my creed, all precepts begin with, 'Thus saith the Lord.' But how do I know His voice? There is a ring, a peculiar intonation in

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the spirit voice of the Lord. Those, who have heard it often, can recognise it at once. It was my God Who said to me long ago "thou shalt become a Theist." It was He Who said, "thou shalt give up all secular work, and take no thought for the morrow." It was He Who said to me "thou shalt lead a simple life, and devote it to missionary work." Surely I am not to blame for anything I may have done under Heaven's injunction. If any one is to blame, the Lord God of Heaven is to answer for having taught me and constrained me to do most unpopular things for the good of my country." Thus in the doctrine of inspiration was laid the foundation-stone of Keshub's future movement of the New Dispensation. These utterances sounded ominous, and produced much greater misrepresentation than what they were meant to explain. Fuller explanations were wanted as to what Keshub meant by "the injunction" and "the voice of God." He had already explained that "so soon as there is a contact of Divinity with humanity, flashes of light instantly burst into view, and illumine, enliven, and inspire the soul." But he explains further. "The voice of God," he says in a little tract on the subject, "is a clear communication of wisdom, a quickening influence, an overpowering impulse, a strange combination of events in life pointing to a lesson for guidance, as a sudden awaking of the whole soul to a particular duty, as an apprehension of signs and indications in nature." "Tell me Father," he prays "if Thy voice is a sound, and whether it comes to us as a sound." The response is thus worded. "I do not speak as men speak. Yet have I a voice which all true devotees can hear. It is the Spirit's voice audible to the spirit's ear. The whole thing is spiritual. There is neither sound, nor language, nor gesture. It is the language of the heart. Neither Hebrew, nor Greek, nor Sanskrit, nor English; but the plain vernacular of the heart, natural instincts and feelings." Could there be a simpler and more rational way of interpreting inspiration? But he does not stop here; he proceeds to interpret the natural cravings of hunger and thirst as commandments from God. "Daily thou feelest hungry, and daily thou eatest thy bread. Do not men say they eat because they feel hungry? What dost thou say? I eat because God says 'Child, eat.' And when I am ill, Thy word of counsel comes to me, "Eat not." At all times, Keshub strongly and unflinchingly maintained conscience to be the direct voice of God. "When thou art about to do something wrong, is there any admonition or remonstrance

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from within, anything that tells thee not to harm thy neighbour, not to speak untruth, not to cause thy wife and children to starve, not to torture an innocent man? If so, whence comes this warning? Unquestionably from Thee, O! Lord. Yes, Thou warnest the heart of man to eschew whatever is wrong, and Thou commandest us to do our various duties. Conscience is evidently Thy voice." Is it not a wonder that in the face of such lucid and unmistakable interpretations, men should accuse Keshub Chunder Sen of preferring supernatural claims, and denounce his impulses as pretensions to a place above the level of humanity? But be that as it may, Keshub Chunder Sen, before he formally proclaimed the New Dispensation, laid on a firm and secure basis the all-important doctrine of the direct commandments of God to the human soul. "We must not regard inspiration as God speaking by fits and starts, but as a perpetual breathing of His Spirit. It may be realised in individual conscience now and then, here and there, by this man or that man, but the Spirit of God is ever working in us, and the flowing current of His inspiration knows no rest. Whether we hear Him or not, He speaks always; whether we catch the rays of His inspiration or not, He shines eternally and sends forth His light in all directions for the redemption of mankind. Our position as frail beings amid the temptations of this world, renders it necessary that God should ever speak, so that we may hear Him whenever we wish, and receive inspiration whenever and wherever we may need it." When the doctrine of inspiration is so defined, what inconsistency could there be that, amidst the perplexities incident to the negotiations of the Cooch Behar marriage, Keshub should pray unto God for guidance, and receive, in his moral consciousness, the direction which he needed? And why should he, when hard pressed, hesitate to avow it as the commandment of God to be honoured and obeyed in preference to every counsel of prudence or propriety? But men disbelieved him, and persecuted him when he said this, and he, according to his spiritual constitution, only stated the doctrines with greater persistence than ever. The *Sunday Mirror*, which was Keshub's religious organ, came out with its devotional columns full of matter put in the form of conversation between the devotee and his God. Keshub thus expressed his deepest convictions on essential matters of religion, because he felt these convictions, as the result of an ardent religious life, were instilled into his soul by the Spirit of God. Keshub's daily devotions in the domestic sanctuary

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were also a long series of the most earnest colloquy. All this, however, provoked severe criticism, it seemed to savour of improper familiarity and irreverence. God addressed as Mother, and represented as speaking to the devotee as a mother would speak to her listening child,—God regarded as the Supreme Queen of the Indian nation, proclaiming the Will Divine, as a queen would make her proclamation to loyal subjects, these were altogether new and startling forms of devotional vocabulary in the Brahmo Somaj. It was repugnant to Europeanised taste and feeling, and hence unpopular in England as well as India. Some characterised it as "undisguised blasphemy," others as simply "awful," which meant shocking. But Keshub, however, put in practice what he had long cherished as vital principles in the relations between God and man. He was indulging in language which was the delight of his spiritual instincts. He was following the well-recognised examples of Oriental devotees and prophets in all ages. He was doing what simple devout men and women do in India every day. In the new *Revival* which he wanted to introduce, he meant to discard the formalism and remoteness which theologians had long interposed between the soul and God. He tried to form a new habit, he taught his disciples to approach God as the child approaches its mother, and he meant to embody the Divine response to such familiar devotions in language as familiar and homely as possible. This was another feature of the New Dispensation.

Some time in the year 1876, in a suburban garden at *Belgharia,* a singular incident took place. There came one morning in a ricketty *ticca gari,* a disorderly-looking young man, insufficiently clad, and with manners less than insufficient. He was introduced as *Ramkrishna,* the *Paramhansa* (great devotee) of *Dakshineshwar.* His appearance was so unpretending and simple, and he spoke so little at his introduction, that we did not take much notice of him at first. But soon he began to discourse in a sort of half delirious state, becoming now and then quite unconscious. What he said, however, was so profound and beautiful that we soon perceived he was no ordinary man. A good many of our readers have seen and heard him. The acquaintance of this devotee which soon matured into intimate friendship, had a powerful effect upon Keshub's catholic mind. The very first thing observable in the *Paramhansa* was the intense tenderness with which he cherished the conception of God as Mother. To him the female principle in the Hindu idea of God-head,

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Shakti, the incarnation of force, popularly called *Kali*, was the Mother Supreme. She tyrannises over all tyrants. She charms and conquers all beings. Yet She is the Mother of the creation. Her infinite power is a guarantee that She can save and protect Her children, those that come to Her as their Mother, and ask the shelter of Her feet. Her motherly solicitude excites the tenderest filial affection in the hearts of Her devotees, and the inspiration of *Ramprasad Sen*,* who expressed himself in the most wonderful songs of filial piety ever sung, bears strange testimony to the reality and effectiveness of the worship of *Kali*. The adoration of *Shakti* was, according to Ram Krishna, a childlike, whole-souled, rapturous self-consecration to the Motherhood of God as represented by the power and influence of woman. Woman, therefore, had been long renounced by our friend in every material and carnal relation. He had a wife, but never associated with her. Woman, he says, is unconquerable except by him who looks up to her as her son. Woman fascinates, and keeps the whole world from the love of God. The highest and holiest saints have been brought back to sin by the nameless power of woman. The absoulte conquest of lust had been his great ambition. For long years, therefore, he said, he made the utmost efforts to be delivered from the influence of woman. His heart-rending supplications for such deliverance, sometimes uttered aloud in his retreat on the riverside, brought crowds of people who bitterly cried when he cried, and could not help blessing him, and wishing him success with their whole hearts. He had successfully escaped the evil of carnality which he dreaded. His Mother to whom he prayed, that is the goddess Kali, made him recognise every woman as Her incarnation, so that he now honoured each member of the other sex as his mother. He bowed his head to the ground before women, and even before little girls; he had insisted upon worshipping not a few of them as a son might worship his mother. The purity of his thoughts and relations towards woman was most unique and instructive. It was the opposite of the European idea. It was an attitude essentially, traditionally, gloriously national. Keshub's own trials and sorrows about the time of the Cooch Behar marriage had spontaneously suggested to him the necessity of regarding God as Mother. In his devotional colloquies he often addressed the Deity in various forms of the word Mother. And now the sympathy, friendship, and

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example of the *Paramhansa* converted the Motherhood of God into a subject of special culture with him. The greater part of the year 1879 witnessed this development. It became altogether a new feature of the *Revival* which Keshub was specially bringing about. However much European taste might dislike such a development, Keshub's religion perceptibly gained in popularity with Hindu society by this means. To embody it in the shape of a practical reform, in the middle of the same year (1879) he organised the *Arya Nari Somaj*, in which the ladies of his family and neighbouring families devoted themselves to spiritual culture. A woman's movement was thus started. Vows and disciplines were laid down for the acceptance of ladies. They held services amongst themselves from which males were excluded. They prayed, composed, discoursed, and sang among themselves.

But if Keshub tried to enrich the Theism of the New Dispensation by incorporating into it the national conception of the Divine Mother, he never for a moment lost the consciousness that such developments were likely to impart a bias to his movement which in the long run might misdirect its course. Nor did merely Hindu developments satisfy his own heart. So parallel with these there was a systematic cultivation of the most profound spirit of Christianity, and persistent efforts were made at sympathy and fellowship with Christians of every denomination. Three months after his lecture on "Am I an Inspired Prophet?" came the great oration on "India asks: Who is Christ?"* For the first time he startled the whole Theistic community by declaring the divinity of Christ. "Verily" said he, "there is such a thing as divinity in Christ." "Were it not for the bold assertion of identity with the Godhead, I would not honour Christ so much as I do." Towards the conclusion he said "the time has come when you can no longer be inimical or indifferent to Christ. Say unto Christ, as unto your best friend—Welcome! I say emphatically, and I say before you all, that Christ is already present in you. He is in you even when you are unconscious of his presence. Even if your life deny Christ, your hearts have secretly accepted him. For Christ is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Keshub did his best to have social communion with every denomination of Christians. Whenever he had any charities to give he gave to Christians, Hindus, and Mahomedans alike. He had intimate relations

*Lectures in India.

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with the most popular Jesuit priest of Calcutta, Father Lafont.† And when the Oxford Missionaries, belonging to the ritualistic division of the Church of England, landed in Calcutta in December, 1880, Keshub was the very first to give them a brotherly reception to which they responded with equal warmth. Hindu and Christian influences thus began to flow side by side in his life and movements, balancing and correcting the tendencies which they were respectively calculated to foster. The growth of the Christian spirit in the New Dispensation thus became national, and the growth of national Theism was regulated by the spirit and teachings of Christ. This harmonious evolution became an eye-sore to certain Christians and Brahmos. The former could not bear that Christ and his religion should be interpreted nationally, and connected with the traditional forms and instincts of Hindu faith; and the latter were sorely offended that Christ and his teachings should be so much talked about and imported into the colourless creed of the Brahmo Somaj. They had expected that the uproar raised affter the Cooch Behar marriage should completely overwhelm Keshub Chunder Sen. And when they found that far from that Keshub continued to produce fresh sensations by unforeseen developments and formidable revivals, their disappointment was great, and disappointment produced rage and hatred.

In the month of October, 1879, when all Bengal was throbbing with the great excitement of the national festival of *Durga Pujah,* Keshub contemplated the first great undertaking of the new revival, a missionary expedition, consisting of a powerful contingent of his most enthusiastic disciples, travelling through a large tract of country in Northern Bengal and Behar. Its object was proclaimed in the shape of a divine commandment. The proclamation was thus worded:—

"Go and proclaim Me, Mother of India," said the Lord to His disciples gathered around Him. "Many are ready to worship Me as their Father. But they know not I am their Mother too, tender, indulgent, forbearing, forgiving, always ready to take back the patient child. Ye shall go forth from city to city and from village to village singing My mercies, and proclaiming unto all men that I am India's Mother. Let your behaviour and conversation, preaching and singing, be such as may convince those amongst whom you go that you are intoxicated with My sweet dispensation and sweeter name. And may India so convinced, come to Me and say—Blessed be Thy name Sweet Goddess! We have heard and seen the Supreme Mother's apostles."

†A great scientist. (Professor, St. X'aviers College, Calcutta).

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Accordingly the expedition started from Calcutta on the 7th November, and travelled from town to town producing great agitation, and awaking men to devotion and the love of God. The procedure was generally this. After the party of about twenty men alighted at the railway station, they unfurled their flags inscribed with various sacred mottos, such as *Satyam eva Jayate,* Truth shall surely conquer; "Come all ye nations to God;" "God's mercy alone availeth," &c. Then they sang popular hymns in the simplest style with the accompaniment of the *Khole, Kartal and Ektera,* instruments which we have described before. They were headed by Keshub as Minister, dressed as a devotee, and went generally to a garden, or meadow, or public thoroughfare, or the riverside. There after the loud and enthusiastic singing which always gathered a crowd, the Minister gave an extemporary discourse in *Bengali,* or *Hindi,* or English, or in the three languages combined, according to the character and composition of the audience. They would then perhaps be invited by a Hindu of some social position to his house, where they would have a simple feast, and where after devout conversation and divine service they would retire to rest, late at night, say at 1 A.M., and sleep on the floor upon some sort of matting or mattress. We give an account of a part of the proceedings written by Keshub himself:—

"Advantageous position was occupied on Saturday afternoon, November 8th, near *Shahjeeka Pukar* in *Mozufferpore,* a very pretty tank, adjoining a *Mahadev* temple. For nearly an hour the Minister spoke in Bengali to a mixed audience composed of Bengalis and up-countrymen. For the benefit of the latter, he said a few concluding words in *Hindi.*

Regret was expressed that more was not said in the local vernacular, but the people enjoyed and felt impressed with the little that was said. To reach the people, one must send his appeals through the channel of the local vernacular. As usual, after the address, our friends sang the Holy Name through the streets in solemn procession. Torches were lighted, the flags unfurled, and the bugle sounded. There were both *Bengali* and *Hindi* songs; in the latter, some of the poorer class *Tirhutis* joined with warm and animated hearts. On Sunday morning, there was the usual service under a shady tree on the banks of the *Burra Gundack,* in which we daily bathed during the entire period of our stay at *Mozufferpore.* Prayer over, we lighted the fuel and cooked our own food. In consequence of there being too much rice in the boiling pot, the water proved insufficient, and the rice seemed sticky. Yet we enjoyed our breakfast and thanked God. In the afternoon the Minister called on Bishop Johnson, who had come to the station in the course of his usual visitation tour. The excellent

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Christian Bishop gave a most cordial welcome to the Brahmo leader in the residence of the local chaplain, and though of differing views, they exchanged their sentiments in a most friendly spirit. The interview was brief but cordial, and on the Minister's return he said he was greatly pleased with the earnestness, humility, condescension and courtesy of the captain of Christ's army in India. A wealthy *Bengali zemindar* kindly lent his garden house, and the regular Sunday service was held there, instead of the small room of the local *Arya Somaj*. There were about two hundred persons present, of whom only a few were Brahmos. After service, the party went on singing a part of the way, and then broke up. In the Science Association Hall, a lecture was delivered on Monday by the Minister on "India and India's God," in which, before an assembly of European and Native gentlemen, he spoke for an hour on the evolution and accomplishment of the purposes of Providence in this great country."

Sometimes, a high English official would preside over the evening meeting, and begin and close the proceedings with sympathetic and complimentary expressions. Among other places, the expedition visited *Gaya,* a great place of pilgrimage to the Hindus, and the village of *Urvilva,* or *Buddha Gaya* where the great *Sakya Muni* attained his illumination (*Nirvana*). At such places Keshub would address the surrounding hills, and forests, and hold communion with the spirit of the great *Buddha.* The developments of the next year showed how far Keshub carried these spiritual exercises.

The expedition returned to Calcutta on the 4th December, after travelling in all a distance of 600 miles. The result of this enthusiastic undertaking is summed up by Keshub in the following words:—

"The whole thing, we say with thankful hearts, has been a great and decided success. The expedition has found a warm welcome wherever it went, and the only thing which the people regretted was the shortness of its stay in each place and the rapidity of its movements. They, one and all, regretted that the Expedition only came, conquered, and went away. But such was the Lord's command. An enthusiastic demonstration, popular excitement, and speedy victory. That was the creed of the preaching army. The object of the expeditionary movement was not to stay and make converts, to form and organise, but simply to excite and animate the public mind, and cast the seeds of truth on all sides.—The Mother, the Mother, the Mother,—this is the battle-cry with which the expedition has humbly, yet boldly, fought to conquer the land, and its success has, therefore, been so great and so glorious."

The four most characteristic discourses that Keshub delivered towards his latter years were "India Asks: Who is Christ?" 1879.* "God-vision in the Nineteenth Century" 1880.*

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"We, the Apostles of the New Dispensation" 1881.* "That Marvellous Mystery, the Trinity" 1882.* His teachings on some of the most important subjects of general religion are elaborately given in these. On the subject of Divine Existence, Keshub never relied much and taught very little on the familiar arguments from Design and Causation.

"We need not have recourse to metaphysics and theology," he says, "for our knowledge of God. Nay, we may well afford to dispense with tame and cold dogmas.

"In the presence of burning reality of a Divine communication, when God Himself says to us 'I am,' what better proof do we need of His existence and nature? Surely, arguments based upon marks of design and evidences of skill in the universe are old and obsolete; they do not and cannot satisfy the mind of any true believer now. Enough if the Lord says 'I am.' The Word of God proves God. All other proofs are as nothing compared to this overwhelming and direct testimony of self-affirmation. I have seen the Lord and heard Him, and therefore believe. Never was belief upreared upon a firmer basis. Indeed this is the highest faith, and here doubt and infidelity are impossible. Can mere theology save me? Can tracts and books fortify and sustain my faith in God? No. To-day I may be logically satisfied that God is, but to-morrow when new trials and difficulties beset me, my intellectual belief may be brought down to the zero point. When, however, the soul has heard from the very lips of the Lord Himself that He is, nothing on earth can shake its conviction or weaken its faith. The word of God is all in all. To us it is so. In these two words, 'I am,' there is a much deeper meaning than is usually attached to them. How do I know that God exists? Because I stand in His presence, and hear those solemn words as they fall from His lips. Seeing and hearing, these are my testimonies. The eye and the ear are my witnesses; I mean the eye and the ear of the soul. They bear consentient testimony to the Godhead. Their evidence none can dispute. Indeed, more irrefragable testimony is not possible than that borne by the senses. As of material, so of spiritual realities, the eye and the ear offer the best and most valid proofs. It is these two that help us to know and follow God in India to-day, not books. Our ideas of the Divinity are not abstract and intellectual, but are based upon direct and intuitive knowledge. Our faith in God is not so much a conception as a spiritual perception. We see Him as a present Reality, a living Person, with the mind's eye, and therefore believe in Him. Nay, we not only see Him, but we likewise hear His voice, as He whispers in our inmost soul to the ear of conscience. He Whom we adore is not a logical Divinity but the Living God, Who makes Himself visible and audible to the believer's soul."†

He explains his idea of God thus:—

"I do not blindly serve Imagination, neither do I idolise Abstraction. My Divinity is equally removed from both. Neither the

*Lectures in India.
†Behold the Light of Heaven in India. Lectures in India.

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painted fiction of ancient mythology, nor the polished abstraction of modern metaphysics finds a place in my philosophy of God-vision. If you wish to see God, you should take care that in giving up the creations of gross imagination, you do not plunge into idealism, the worship of pure abstraction. Are you going to accept as your God the mere idea of divine power, the idea of infinite wisdom, the idea of love, or the idea of immaculate holiness? Is an idea God? Is thought Deity? It is one thing to think of attributes, and cognize separate and abstract qualities, and quite another thing to perceive an object. Your knowledge of divine attributes may be thoroughly correct. But in thought you abstract those qualities, and take them piece-meal. What are these divine attributes, wisdom and power, love and holiness, but broken lights. . . . You have broken the nature of the true God into small bits for the sake of convenient apprehension. Not being able to take in the whole, you divide it by sharp analysis, and try to think of the separate attributes and qualities, one after another. This, indeed, is no vision. Synthesis is essential to perception. In order that you may see God, you must concentrate in a focus all these scattered and broken lights, and apprehend them in synthetic unity. No fragments of abstract notions flitting before the student of philosophy, but the perception of the Living God, the personal one, centre and substance of the highest conceivable attributes, that is God-vision. In it humanity sees the indivisble and undivided Deity as a whole."*

Keshub's whole philosophy of spiritual life was involved in this double principle of synthesis and analysis.

"Do not break," he says in God-vision, "but unite. Unite in a personal Unity the various fragments of a divided Deity scattered broadcast over the world, and adored separately in different ages, in different schools of religion and philosophy. Bring all these broken units into one focus, and you will see in this a beautiful perfect and harmonious whole, the very Living God of the universe. . . .Not the pantheist's God, not the idolator's God, not the visionary's God, not the metaphysician's God, but the true, personal God, full of wisdom and love, full of power and holiness, and perfect. This is the God of all enternity, the God of the entire universe."*

He first of all teaches the realisation of God in the manifold forces of nature, as the Unity of force.

"What is the single force to which both mind and matter may be referred ultimately, which will fulfil the desire of ages, and the hope of the scientific world? In these walls, and in these pillars, in the men and women assembled in this hall, in the earth below, and the heaven above, in the light and in the air, in the world within and the world without, in history and in biography, what is the single force that pervades all and guides all, supports and quickens all? . . .I unhesitatingly call it God-force. A personal creative force, an intelligent Will force."*

In the truth of a future life Keshub had a faith whose clearness and strength almost amounted to direct vision. He

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never taught or tried to localise heaven and hell. The tremendous mystery of death had to him a darkness which he did not venture to penetrate. But of the beatitudes of heaven and salvation he had a positive fore-taste. He spoke of the life immortal not with mere belief, not with mere expectation, but with certain knowledge. In his lecture on "Our Faith and Experiences" delivered in 1876, he speaks thus:—

"I questioned the wisdom of searching for separate proofs of the existence of the future world. What better proof can there be of our immortality than the fact of God's existence? He who believes in the Living God has already tacitly believed in the next world. In fact the two doctrines are inseparably linked together in the depths of our being. The idea of immortality lies potently in the idea of the God-head, and requires only to be evolved out of it. The Infinite Father above and the eternal home before, meet in one focus in the eye of faith, and may be said to be apprehended together in the intuitive consciousness. In natural religion, in Pure Theism, there can be no divinity without a future world, no immortality without a divinity. The intuitive eye raised above beholds God; directed forward it sees its future home in the next world. A Father without a Home, a Home without a Father,—that is an anomaly against which nature rebels. A more philosophical analysis of Theistic faith gives us as the last fact a deep sense of dependence, in which both these doctrines have their root. The soul in the earliest dawn of faith feels that it depends for life, and for everything else, upon the living God. "In Him we live and move and have our being" is the primitive creed of the infant soul. And in this you see already the root idea of immortality. The soul feels that its life is in God, and shall continue to be in God. I live in the Infinite Vital Power,—here you have the doctrine of God. I will continue to live in that power,—here you have the doctrine of immortality. If we have then no life apart from God, we cannot but regard Him and our future existence as one integral fact. How can you separate the one from the other? Nay, by rejecting the doctrine of immortality, you virtually surrender all the important attributes of Divinity, and thus reject the true God. If there were no hereafter to supplement and perfect our life here, God's wisdom, power, mercy, and justice would all be gravely impugned, and we would in fact have an imperfect and finite deity to adore and honour. Believe that the dissolution of the body is the last chapter in the history of man's life, and you banish the Great God from your theology. Thus both by positive and negative evidence, all true believers are shut up to the alternative of accepting at one and the same time, and as part of one indivisible truth, the doctrines of Divinity and Immortality. As the Lord enters the heart of the devout believer, He brings with Him the future heaven, the house of "many mansions," where the moral world is completed, and where blessedness and glory everlasting await His children. If then you acknowledge Him, you must believe in that heaven, and strive to live righteously here, that you may worthily enter your place hereafter." * * * * * "If we live in Him we have joy and holiness

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and salvation. Who cares about a distant heaven apart from God? Fancy may paint it with rainbow colours and adorn it with all conceivable beauty and sweetness, and thus make it altogether a blissful and romantic abode high above the clouds. To the stern eye of faith this bright picture of elysium is visionary, a pleasant dream, nothing more. The wishes, fancies, aspirations of all who live in the flesh, however religious they may be, will always look forward to a land of joy, where all the pleasant objects and relationships of this life have been transferred. But the decrees of Heaven are not as men's wishes. Nor do the spiritually-minded covet a dream-land agreeable to the senses. They do not, as others do, pray to God for heaven hereafter; they pray to God for life in God, and deem any other heaven an impiety, and a sacrilege. To live day and night in the Lord, with thoughts, feelings and deeds, all centred in Him alone, that is what they seek as their heaven. Blessed are they whose souls always, and in all circumstances, dwell lovingly in the Lord, for they dwell in heaven. Indeed, there is heaven here as well as on the other side of the grave. Even in the midst of the pressing activities of business, there is heaven. Even in earthly places shines the light of heaven. Are you engaged in the ordinary duties of domestic life surrounded by your family and children? Are you serving as a clerk in a mercantile office or as an apprentice in some manufactory? Are you inditing in the cabinet chamber elaborate minutes on complicated economic questions upon which hangs the fate of an entire nation? There, even there you may occasionally feel around you an encompassing heaven, if the heart is with God. Wherever you may be, if the soul dwells in the All-Soul, you are in heaven! Say not of heaven, it is lo! here! lo! there! for it is within. If you keep near your God, you cannot be far from heaven, for your God is your heaven. You need not repair to heaven, there to meet the Heavenly Father, for where the Heavenly Father is, there surely is heaven. And where is He not? Above, below, here, there, and everywhere is He. I turn to the right. He is here ; I turn to the left, lo! He is there. How real, how sweet His presence! How thrilling, how solemn and holy! I tell you, brethren, in all seriousness, the Spirit of your Father encircles you as a holy and sweet presence. To be conscious of this is heaven. Cultivate in the depths of the heart this consciousness of a holy and loving Father and Friend encircling you by His arms, and you will feel as if you are in the Holy of holies, and you wil have nothing left to desire here or hereafter. It cannot be that you, who trust in the Great God and hold communion with Him, have never seen heaven. The truth is, we have seen it now and then, but have forgotten it, and dismissed it from our thoughts and aspirations. Men often realise heaven during prayer and communion, but they lose it as soon as they enter upon worldly avocations. If we could, by proper culture, always keep alive the consciousness of the indwelling Spirit of God, and cherish it in all places, and amid the various duties of life, we would assuredly live altogether in heaven. Strive then, my friends, to realise this spiritual heaven as a present reality, by living entirely in the Spirit-God, and banish all illusory dreams of a distant paradise above the clouds. Believe that God is heaven, and seek heaven in God. Remember that he is a true believer who seeks no other heaven but God. How beautifully is the Hindu idea of a true devotee set forth in the *Bhagavatagita*. There the

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Lord describes His own devoted disciple in language such as this: "My devotee is satisfied with Me, and he feels on all sides heavenly sweetness, his heart has been surrendered to me, and he desires nothing besides Me. Even salvation he desires not, and even the heavens above he despises."*

Thus with Keshub the evidence and ideas of God and heaven are not drawn from metaphysics, and the stock arguments of Natural Theology, but from the all-encompassing Force and Life which appeals to the eye and the ear, and through them to the heart, which is near and immediate to everyone. In his lecture on God-vision, he gives three illustrations of God-Force. The first is the machinery of the clock with the dial taken off. "Take off the huge dial from the face of the universe. Then you will see the secret springs of the machinery which keep the universe in working order. Each wheel in its place, and the primary force quickens and regulates the movements of all the wheels, and gives them law and method, force and harmony. Put the dial on again. You see only outside nature. . . . You perceive movements and phenomena only, but you do not comprehend them. You have no access to the hidden secret."† The second illustration is a tree, with its branches, blossoms, fruits and foliage. The secret and inexplicable vitality of the tree lies in the root. "Is not the universe a mighty tree, the wonder of ages? Who supplies it with life? Uncover the root, and you at once see how it supplies sap and strength. The root explains the tree. The root-force upholds the universe, and explains it."† The third illustration is a child clinging to its mother's breast. The mother explains the child, she is its philosophy, she is the reason of its life, and its nourishment; her tender arms are its home, her breast, its food and drink. . . Behold the universe, held on the arms of the Supreme Mother, Who is incessantly pouring through secondary forces, the milk of life and strength into all objects and beings . . .Every little child is sustained by its mother; every tree is sustained by its roots; the mainspring causes and sustains the movements of the wheels in every time-piece." He next speaks of God-Force in humanity. "Every prophet who came down from heaven as an emana-

* সন্তুষ্টঃ সততং যোগী যতাত্মা দৃঢ় নিশ্চয়ঃ।
ময্যর্পিত মনোবুদ্ধির্যো মদ্ভক্তঃ স মে প্রিয়ঃ॥
গীতা।

†This may be construed as some support of the argument from Design.

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tion of spirit-force from the Almighty, went back to Him as Christ did, after fulfilling his mission. . . . Not only is Christ there, but there are also Moses and Elias, and all the Jewish prophets of olden times, and Paul, and all the Apostles. And Chaitanya too, the blessed prophet of India, and the immortal Sakya Muni, and Confucius and Zoroaster too. All our masters are there assembled. Oh! blessed confraternity of disembodied spirits! How they all shine in the light of the Central Sun, and reflect His glory. Celestial spirit-forces animated by the Supreme Spirit . . . . .As here all terrestrial and material forces, so above all celestial and moral forces we call prophets, are vivified by the Primary Moral Force . . All the prophets dwell in God, and draw their spiritual nourishment, and inspiration from Him." * In his lecture on "That Marvellous Mystery, The Trinity,"* Keshub profoundly describes the idea of the Hindu *Brahma,* and the Christian *Logos,* as well as the process of creation :—

"Give your imagination wings, and let it soar higher and higher through bygone epochs. Let it start on a long voyage athwart the noisy ages of history, and the crowded scenes of human activity. Let its pinions press on, swift as lightning, stopping nowhere, leaving nation after nation behind, epoch after epoch of the remotest antiquity, till it is ushered into the regions of eternal silence. Here the Supreme *Brahma* of the *Veda* and the *Vedanta* dwells hid in Himself. Here sleeps the mighty *Jehovah* with might yet unmanifested. Eternal and awful silence reigns on all sides. Not an event stirs the ocean of time, not an object is to be seen in the vast ocean of space. Not a breath ruffles the serene bosom of sleeping Infinity. Impenetrable darkness above and below, before and behind! In shoreless immensity is the mind lost. Here is nought that the eye can see, or the ear hear. Yet here, they say, the Eternal Spirit dwelleth. Who can realise the Infinite Being. Who can comprehend the Mysterious One? Thought cannot approach Him. The mind understands not Who or What He is. How sublime is the passage in the *Rigveda* in which the ancient Hindu *Rishi* speaks of the Unknowable One :—

"There was neither Aught nor Naught, nor air, nor sky beyond
What covered all? Where rested all? In watery gulf profound?
Nor death was there, nor deathlessness, nor change of night and day
That One breathed calmly, self-sustained; nought else beyond It lay.
Gloom hid in gloom existed first,—One sea, eluding view."†

তত দশম মণ্ডলে একাদশ অনুবাকে প্রথমং সূক্তং
নাসদাসীন্নোসদাসীত্তদানীং নাসীদ্রজো নোব্যোমা পরোযৎ।
কিমাবরীবঃ কুহ কস্য শর্ম্মন্নংভঃ কিমাসীদ্গাহনং গভীরং॥ ১

*Lectures in India.

†ঋগ্বেদ

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সেই সময়ে সেই সৃষ্টির পূর্ব্বে অসৎ ছিল না, ইন্দ্রিয় গ্রাহ্য জগৎ যে সৎ তাহাও ছিল না। এক কণা রেণুও ছিল না, এই মহান্ প্রকাশও ছিল না। উপরে যে দ্যুলোক তাহাও ছিল না। যেমন আকাশকে চন্দ্র সূর্য্য গ্রহ নক্ষত্র এখন আবরণ করিয়া রহিয়াছে, যখন আকাশও ছিল না তখন আকাশের এই সকল আবরণই বা কোথায়? কোথায় বা কাহার এই সকল ভোগ্য বস্তু? এই যে গহণ গভীর সমুদ্র তাহাও কি তখন ছিল? ১

মৃত্যুরাসীদমৃতং ন তর্হি ন রাত্র্যা অহ্ন আসীৎ প্রকেতঃ।
আনীদবাতং স্বধয়া তদেকং তস্মাদ্ধান্যন্ন পরঃ কিংচ নাস॥ ২

মৃত্যু, অমৃত তখন কিছুই ছিল না। রাত্রির সহিত দিনও ছিল না। প্রজ্ঞানও ছিল না। তখন স্বীয় শক্তির সহিত অবাত প্রাণিত সেই এক ব্রহ্মই জাগ্রৎ ছিলেন। তাঁহা ভিন্ন আর কিছুই ছিল না, এই বর্ত্তমান জগৎও ছিল না। ২

তম আসীত্তমসাগূঢ়মগ্রেঽপ্রকেতং সলিলং সর্ব্বমাইদং।
তুচ্ছ্যেনাভ্বপিহিতং যদাসীত্তপসস্তন্মহিনাজায়তৈকং॥ ৩

অগ্রে, সৃষ্টির পূর্ব্বে অন্ধকার অন্ধকারে আচ্ছন্ন ছিল। এই সমুদয় অপ্রজ্ঞাত জ্যোতিহীন মহাশূন্য সমুদ্র ছিল। তুচ্ছ অজ্ঞানের দ্বারা সম্যক আচ্ছাদিত যে এক বিশ্ব কার্য্যের বীজ ছিল, তাহা পরমেশ্বরের জ্ঞানালোচনার মাহাত্মে ব্যক্ত হইয়া উৎপন্ন হইল।

কামস্তদগ্রে সমবর্ত্ততাধি মনসোরেতঃ প্রথমং যদাসীত্।
সতোবন্ধুমসতি নিরবিন্দন্হৃদি প্রতীষ্যা কবয়োমনীষা॥ ৪

মনের প্রথম বীর্য্য যাহা ছিল, সেই যে প্রেম, তাহা সর্ব্বাগ্রে আবির্ভূত হইল। সত্যের সহিত অকৃত কারণের যে বন্ধন সেই প্রেম বন্ধন; সেই প্রেম বন্ধনকে কবিরা, হৃদয়ে বুদ্ধির দ্বারা বিচার করিয়া জানিলেন।

তিরশ্চীনোবিততোরশ্মিরেষামধঃ স্বিদাসীত্তুপরিস্বিদাসী তত্।
রেতোধা আসন্ মহিমান আসন্স্বধা অবস্তাৎ প্রযতিঃ পরস্তাৎ॥ ৫

এই কার্য্যকলাপদিগের সর্ব্বত্র প্রবিষ্ট ও সুবিস্তৃত যে রশ্মি তাহা অধঃস্থিত এই পৃথিবী হইতে উঠিয়াছে কি উপরের স্বর্গ হইতে আসিয়াছে? এই সৃষ্টি কার্য্যের মধ্যে অগণ্য জীব জন্তু রহিয়াছে এবং ইহা অন্ন জল প্রভৃতি মহাবিস্তৃত ভোগ্য বস্তুতে পূর্ণ রহিয়াছে। সেই ভোক্তৃ ভোগ্যের মধ্যে অন্ন প্রভৃতি ভোগ্য প্রপঞ্চ নিকৃষ্ট এবং নিয়ন্তা ভোক্তা যে জীব, তাহা উৎকৃষ্ট। ৫

কো অদ্ধাবেদ কইহ প্রবোচৎ কুত আজাতা কুত ইয়ং বিসৃষ্টিঃ।
অর্বাগ্দেবা অস্য বিসর্জনেনাথা কোবেদ যত আবভূব॥ ৬

কে ঠিক জানে কোথা হইতে এই বিচিত্র সৃষ্টি? কে বা এখানে বলিয়াছে যে কোথা হইতে এই সকল জন্মিয়াছে? দেবতারা এই সৃষ্টির পরে জন্মিয়াছেন। তবে কে জানে যাহা হইতে এই জগৎ উৎপন্ন হইয়াছে।

ইয়ং বিসৃষ্টির্যত আবভূব যদি বা দধে যদি বা ন।
যো অস্যাধ্যক্ষঃ পরমে ব্যোমন্ত্সো অং গ বেদ যদি বা ন বেদ॥ ৭

এই বিচিত্র সৃষ্টি যাঁহা হইতে জন্মিয়াছে, যদি ইহাকে কেহ ধারণ করিয়া থাকেন তবে তিনিই তাহা ধারণ করিয়া আছেন—যদি বা নাই ধারণ করিয়া থাকেন। পরম আকাশে যিনি এই জগতের অধ্যক্ষ, তিনি অবশ্য তাহা জানেন, কিম্বা যদি নাই জানেন।

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So sang the ancient bard wrapt in wonder. What more can the poet or philosopher declare of the strange Being Who existed before the creation began? It was neither naught, or aught, neither night, nor day. What was It? Who can say? It seemed to be the dark reign of death. Power there was, but fettered in sleep. The tremendous activity, where was it? Hushed and enveloped in profound silence. If Divinity there was, It was the Divinity of darkness and silence. But anon the scene changes. Lo! a voice is heard, it is terrible. Like the deafening peals of artillery it shook the foundations of the ancient city of silence. Creation sprang. The sun, the moon, the stars in clusters were strewn round high heaven in profusion. And lo! beauty and symmetry, harmony and order, science and law, life and light and love, all came streaming from that one creative fiat, that Almighty Word. Yes it was the Word that created the universe. They call it *Logos*. Rightly they call it by that significant name. What was it but a sound, a voice, a word, a breath put forward by Infinite Power that created the mighty universe. What was creation but the wisdom of God going out of its secret chambers, and taking a visible shape, His potential energy asserting itself in unending activity? The dormant will stirred itself, and as it stirred itself, there came forth world after world leaping out of the bosom of God. Force there was, but it spake not, was speechless. As it spake, and the solemn fiat went, "Let there be light," instantly there was light. That voice, once uttered, has ever since rolled backward and forward through the amplitudes of space, creating fresh forms of light and life, East, West, North, and South. Creation means not a single act, but a continued process. It began, but has gone on for endless ages ever since it began. It is nothing but a continued evolution of creative force, a ceaseless emanation of power and wisdom from the Divine mind. The silent Divinity began to speak, and His speech, His word, a continued breathing of force is creation. What a grand metaphor is the *Logos*! The Hindu too like the Christian believes in the continued evolution of the *Logos*, and its graduated development through the ever-advancing stages of life. The *Puranas* speak of different manifestations or incarnations of the Deity in different epochs of the world's history. Lo! the Hindu *Avatar* rises from the lowest scale of life through the fish, the tortoise, and the hog up to the perfection of humanity. Indian *Avatarism* is indeed a crude representation of the ascending scale of Divine creation. Such precisely is the modern theory of evolution. How from the lowest forms of gross matter is evolved the vitality of the vegetable world in all its fulness and luxuriance! And then from the most perfect and vital types of vegetable life springs the least in the animal kingdom, which again rises, through endless and growing varieties to the very highest intelligence and sagacity. But creation stops not here. From animal life it ascends to humanity, and finds its full development in man. In the evolution of man, however, creation is not exhausted. It goes further and further still along the course of progressive humanity. In the earliest phase of his life, whether in the little infant, or the primitive barbarian, man, with all his highly finished organism, is but a creature of God. Through culture and education he rises in the scale of humanity, till he rises to the Son of God. You see how the Lord asserted His power and established His dominion in the material and animal kingdom, and then in the lower world of

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humanity. When that was done the volume of the Old Testament was closed. The New Testament commenced with the birth of the Son of God. The *Logos* was the beginning of creation, and its perfection too was *Logos*, the culmination of humanity in the Divine Son."*

We have already said how the association of *Paramhansa* Ram Krinshna developed the conception of the Motherhood of God which had often enough occurred in Keshub's mind before, and found utterance in the pressure of his trials and sorrows. In the *Paramhansa's* teaching there was another remarkable characteristic. This sweet-souled devotee had gathered the essential conceptions of Hindu polytheism into an original structure of eclectic spirituality. Take for instance the conception of *Shiva*. The *Paramhansa* often said he realised *Shiva* as the incarnation of the contemplativeness of *Yoga*. Forgetful of all worldly care, absorbed in the meditation of the ineffable perfections of the Supreme *Brahma*, impenetrable by pain, passion, toil, or loneliness, ever joyful in the blessedness of divine communion, silent, serene, immovable like the *Himalayas* which are his abode, *Mahadeva* is the ideal of all God-absorbed men. Then perhaps he would talk of *Krishna* whom he realised as the incarnation of divine love. Behold, he would say, the face of *Krishna* as represented popularly. Does it resemble a man's face or a woman's? Is there a shadow of sensuality in it, a hair of masculine coarseness? It is a tender, female face that *Krishna* has, in it there is the fulness of boyish delicacy, and girlish grace. By his affectionateness, many-sided and multiform, he won the hearts of men and women to the religion of *Bhakti*. That divine love may take the form of every sanctified relation in life is the great mission of *Krishna* to prove. As the loving child absorbing all the fondness of the parent's heart ; as the loving friend drawing the deepest loyalty and love ; as the adored master the sweetness and truth of whose teaching converted both the sexes, women specially, to the consecration of a heartfelt piety. *Krishna*, said the *Paramhansa*, brought the religion of love into Hindustan. Thus, though a Hindu of Hindus, Ramkrishna was not a Hindu of the ordinary type. He was not a *Shivaite*, not a *Shakta*, not a *Vedantist* ; yet he was the totality of all these. He worshipped *Shiva*, he worshipped *Kali*, *Rama*, *Krishna*, he was a confirmed advocate of *Vedantic doctrines*. He was a believer in idolatry, and yet a faithful and most devoted

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meditator of the perfections of the Great Formless One, Whom he called অখণ্ড সচ্চিদানন্দ (the undivided truth, wisdom, and joy). This strange eclecticism suggested to Keshub's appreciative mind the thought of broadening the spiritual structure of his own movement. His mind, which was becoming more and more mystical, threw itself into the metaphorical profundity of the Eastern imagination. The Hindu conceptions of the Divine attributes spontaneously recommended themselves as beautiful and true, and also as the surest means of making his faith intelligible and acceptable in the land. Of course he kept the simple universal basis of Theism intact. But from a Theistic point of view he gave the most brilliant expositions of the teachings of mythology. These reformed expositions have been utilised by orthodox champions to bring about a re-action on behalf of popular idolatry. The philosophy of the whole question was summarised by him in the *Sunday Mirror* thus:—

"Hindu idolatry is not altogether to be rejected or overlooked. As we explained, some time ago, it represents millions of broken fragments of God. Collect them together, and you get the indivisible Divinity. When Hindus lost sight of their great God, they contented themselves with retaining particular aspects of Him, and representing them in human shapes or images. Their idolatry is nothing but the worship of a divine attribute materialised. If the material shape is given up, what remains is a beautiful allegory or picture of Heaven's dispensations. The Theist rejects the image, but he cannot dispense with the spirit of which that image is the form. The revival of the spirit, the destruction of the form, is the work of the New Dispensation. Cheer up, O Hindus! for the long-lost Father from Whom ye have for centuries strayed away is coming back to you. The road is clear enough; it lies through our numerous *Puranas* and Epics. Never were we so much struck with the divinity of the eclectic method, as when we explored the gloomy regions of mythological India. The sermons now delivered in the *Brahma Mandir* are solely occupied with the precious truths discovered therein, and our own occupation is merely to gather the jewels as we go on. We have found out that every idol worshipped by the Hindu represents an attribute of God, and that each attribute is called by a peculiar name. The believer in the New Dispensation is required to worship God as the possessor of all those attributes, represented by the Hindu as innumerable, or 330 millions. To believe in an undivided Deity, without reference to the aspects of His nature is to believe in an abstract God, and it would lead us to practical rationalism and infidelity. If we are to worship Him in all His manifestations, we shall name one attribute *Lakshmi*, another *Saraswati*, another *Mahadeva*, &c., and worship God each day under a new name, that is to say in a new aspect."

It might be difficult for most Theists outside of India to realise that "the worship of an undivided Deity would

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lead to practical rationalism and infidelity." There is no doubt, however, that in point of fact every form of popular religion in India has resolved the Divine nature into one or other simple idea, such as force or love working out each to its utmost stretch of spiritual meaning. On Keshub's part, an adoption of these various Hindu aspects and conceptions tended on the one hand to enrich the monotheism of the New Dispensation, and on the other to offer a reasonable explanation of Hindu polytheism. This was really helpful in reconciling Keshub's exalted precepts with the great religious systems of India. Thus "gathering the fragments of the divine attributes and conceptions into a focus of undivided Diety," is what Keshub calls his synthesis of the perception of God; and "worshipping God in His various aspects and attributes" is his analysis. In his Bengali sermons about this time, he accordingly took up Hindu gods and goddesses by name, and explained the ideas that underlay each. This made him exceedingly popular with large sections of the Hindu community, but it led also to the accusation that the leader of the Brahmo Somaj was dallying with popular superstition, and showing signs that he would soon merge into the great gulf of Hindu polytheism. We have already alluded to the sagacity with which Keshub balanced the Hindu tendencies of his movement with the adoption of Christian ideas, so as to make steady harmonious progress with his secret work of organising a perfect National Church. His famous lectures on "India Asks: Who is Christ," and "That Marvellous Mystery, The Trinity" were delivered in 1879 and 1882 respectively. In 1876 we found Keshub in his lecture on "Jesus Christ" asking "Is not Christ above humanity?" And he had answered his own question with the exclamation "Verily, Jesus is above ordinary humanity." The recurrence of the same adjective in both the question and answer suggests that Christ's humanity in the speaker's mind was extraordinary. In 1879 after a decade of thought and culture, he substitutes the word divine for extraordinary. He commences his lecture on "India Asks: who is Christ" with these words "I desire to discourse on the great subject of the divinity of Jesus." Christ, he says, "strikes the keynote of his doctrine in the formula 'I and my Father are one.' This was an announcement of identity with the Godhead." In analysing this announcement, Keshub says he finds "nothing but the philosophical principle underlying the popular doctrine of self-abnegation in a very lofty spiritual sense.

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Christ destroyed self. And, as self ebbed away, heaven came pouring into his soul. For nature abhors a vacuum; and hence, as soon as nature is emptied of self, Divinity fills the void. The nature of the Lord filled him, and everything divine in him." "He always felt that the root of his being was God Himself, a fact of which we are not always conscious. He had his life rooted in Divinity. He always felt that the Lord was underlying his whole existence. And therefore, without equivocation, and with all the boldness and candor of conscious simplicity, he proclaimed unto the world the fact that he was one with God." Keshub also spoke of the pre-existence of Christ. Christ before his birth formed a part of the Divine plan for the future good of mankind. The omniscience of God knew from the beginning the destinies of all men. His perfect knowledge saw in their fullest relations the causes and consequences of human sin and salvation. Both the evil and deliverance from the power of evil were present in the Divine consciousness from the beginning of the world. The future Christ, as God had meant to create him, the potential energy of the as yet unborn Christ, existed in the eternal depths, in the dispensation which was to come in the fulness of time. In that stage Christ, certainly, had no personality. He was the thought and energy of God. "Christ pre-existed as an idea, as a plan of life, as a predetermined dispensation yet to be realised, as a purity of character not concrete, but abstract."* Regarding the resurrection and immortality of Christ, he says, Jesus lives in heaven not as an impersonal and absorbed essence of the Divine consciousness, which he was before he came to the world, nor as a material form with which popular imagination clothes him, but as a separate personified soul, in its own sphere of blessedness, achieving a higher and still higher standard of perfection, than was ever known in his life on earth. His perfection on earth was relative, his perfection in heaven is ever tending to be absolute. But among us to-day he lives as a great leaven. "He lives," says Keshub, "in all Christian lives, and in all Christian influence at work around us. You may deny his doctrine, you may even hate his name, but you cannot resist his influence. Christ exists throughout Christendom like an all-pervading leaven, mysteriously and imperceptibly leavening the bias of millions of men and women." The

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last time that Keshub makes a public statement on the subject of Christ is in his celebrated lecture on "That Marvellous Mystery, The Trinity." We have already given his views on the Logos, the Father and Creator, the evolution of the universe, and its development into the humanity of the Son of God. He speaks next of the Holy Spirit, and then elucidates the mission of Christ. "Here you have the complete triangular figure of the Trinity, three profound truths, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, making up the harmonious whole of the economy of creation. Look at this clear triangular figure with the eye of faith, and study its deep mathematics. The apex is the very God *Jehovah*, the Supreme *Brahma* of the *Vedas*. Alone, in His eternal glory, He dwells. From Him comes down the Son in a direct line, an emanation from Divinity. Thus, God descends and touches one end of the base of humanity, then, running all along the base, permeates the world, and then, by the power of the Holy Ghost, drags up regenerated humanity to Himself. Divinity coming down to humanity is the Son. Divinity carrying up humanity to Heaven is the Holy Ghost. This is the whole philosophy of salvation. . . The Father continually manifests His wisdom and mercy in creation, till they take the pure form of Sonship in Christ, and then out of one little seed Christ, is evolved a whole harvest of endless and ever-multiplying Christs. God coming down and going up—this is creation, this is salvation. In this plain figure of three lines, you have the solution of a vast problem. The Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost; the Creator, the Exemplar, the Sanctifier; I am, I love, I save; the Still God, the Journeying God, the Returning God; Force, Wisdom, Holiness, the True, the Good, the Beautiful; সৎ, চিৎ, আনন্দ, Truth, Intelligence, Joy."

This doctrine of Christ, Keshub applies to his whole theory of Great Men. His loyalty to Jesus involves his loyalty to all the other masters. He speaks thus:—"Do not the Christian Fathers speak of an all-pervading Christ? Do they not bear unequivocal testimony to Christ in Socrates? Even in barbarian philosophy, and in all Hellenic literature, they saw and adored their Logos Chirst. I deny and repudiate the little Christ of popular theology, and stand up for a greater Christ, a fuller Christ, a more eternal Christ, a more universal Christ. I plead for the eternal Logos of the Fathers, and I challenge the world's assent. This was the Christ who was in Greece and Rome, in Egypt and India. In the bards and poets of the

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Rigveda was he. He dwelt in Confucius and in Sakya Muni. This is the true Christ whom I see everywhere, in all lands and in all times, in Europe, and in Asia, in Africa, in America, in ancient and in modern times. He is not the monopoly of any nation or creed. All literature, all science, all philosophy, every doctrine that is true, every form of righteousness, every virtue that belongs to the Son, is the true subjective Christ whom all ages glorify."* In his lecture on "God-vision," Keshub asks, "Do you not believe that all true spirits have a mutual affinity, a close kinship towards each other, and that they all abide together in the Lord, and together they eat the bread of life, and drink the nectar of joy in heaven? . . Behold the whole family of saints and prophets, all united with each other, and united in the Lord! Not only is Christ there but there are also Moses and Elias, and all the Jewish prophets of olden times, and Paul and all the Apostles. And Chaitanya too, the blessed prophet of India, and the immortal Sakya Muni, and Confucius, and Zoroaster too. All our masters are there assembled. Seated on smaller thrones they surround the throne of the Great Spirit, Whose glory is in them, and in Whose glory they dwell. Oh! blessed confraternity of disembodied souls! How they all strive in the light of the central Sun, and reflect His glory! Celestial Spirit-forces animated by the Supreme Spirit. As here all terrestrial and material forces, so above all celestial primary and moral forces, we call prophets, are vivified by the Moral Force."

All the lectures, delivered in different parts of India, and in England, established Keshub's reputation as an orator. He was the father of the present order of English oratory in the rising generation of Hindus. Eloquent speech, or what is accepted as such, is now an ordinary gift of young men in Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, but such public speaking was all but unknown before Keshub Chunder Sen's time. The only man who was looked upon as a speaker was the late Ram Gopal Ghose, but he spoke on rare occasions, and his utterances were, we believe, carefully prepared beforehand. Keshub was the first to introduce the practice of giving purely extemporary lectures on religious and philosophical subjects, an adventure for which in the beginning he was often severely taken to task. But he persevered, not because of a wish to be famous, but only because his duties forced the practice on him. His fervour, his rhetoric, his style, his methods, as

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imbibed by the numerous class of Indian orators, have now traversed far beyond the subjects to which he confined himself, but whether it be political or social agitation in which enthusiastic Hindus take part, they all dig from the great mines of eloquence which Keshub Chunder Sen first opened in the national character of modern India. He strongly believed that the English language had an all important mission in forming the character and convictions of his countrymen. He found it, and made it, more than it ever was, the connecting link between the various nationalities and systems of thought in India. Nay, it was the vehicle of communication between India and the whole civilised globe. It was the only possible medium by which anything like an exchange of thought and aspiration could be made between the present race of Hindus, and those with whom lies the duty of educating them. Keshub, therefore, from very early age cultivated the habit of speaking and writing the English language. Earlier even than the Colutolah Evening School in 1855, he formed diverse juvenile organisations to which allusion has been made before. At the meetings of these societies, Keshub indulged in impromptu speeches, uncut exuberances of rhetoric, undigested poetry, youthful speculations and emotions mostly imported from school-books, that lasted generally for two or three hours. We had not the courage to run away from these performances, which, truth to say, we did not comprehend, or relish, or care for, and they sorely tried our patience and power of keeping awake. As Keshub grew up, this eloquence became impassioned and fierce, but still retained its wordy extravagance. But as his trials multiplied upon him, and his inner nature deepened, by a hidden process his powers of speaking became chastened. The long periods, the constant figures, the stereotyped phrases, perfectly tropical in their luxuriance and amplitude, imperceptibly disappeared. The rhetoric contracted, and shapened itself. Within a few years, the dignity, purity, and power of his English oratory drew the admiration of finished English speakers. As in everything else, so in this, Keshub was the example of growth and self-improvement. His Bengali discourses were the perfect models of chastity, and grace of diction. We can name eminent Sanskrit scholars who attended the services in the *Brahma Mandir*, not from any religious sympanthy, but by the attraction of his faultless and limpid elocution in the Bengali language. He was free from affectation and mannerism of every kind. He seldom moved his hands and eyes, and never threw himself into attitudes. His

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voice, never trained, had the solidity, modulation, and depth of natural music. His sentiments flowed without a seeming effort. Born master of his own vernacular, which he never took pains to study, Keshub concentrated his powers more fully on the production of a devotional and theological literature in English. His English lectures, tracts, and articles, contain in a most elaborate form his teachings. Nobody who knew Keshub could say that he ever spent much time in the study of language after coming out of college. He knew little of the modern masters of English style, and never made any secret of his scanty acquaintance with the literature of the day. But nevertheless his utterances unmistakably showed a mastery of language and culture, attainable only by the closest and most painstaking study. The fact is he was a tremendously true and earnest man. Whenever he approached the discussion of any subject, he focussed upon its lineaments the stupendous lights and intensities of his genius, until every intricacy and depth lay revealed. The flood of his oratory fell like a torrent from some Himalayan height, instantaneous, vast, clear, overpowering. It was deeper and heigher than art. It was nature, spirit-nature asserting its fulness, and might, and majesty. Well did Robert Knight, the ablest of our Calcutta journalists, say, "When Keshub speaks, the world listens!" Yet Keshub says of himself in one of his lectures, "I never learnt elocution. I have a wild, uncultured sort of eloquence which means only emotion. If I am excited I can speak. If I am not, there is neither grammar nor sense in what I say, and you will be struck with the poverty of my language. I am sure to break down if I attempt to speak when my feelings are not properly roused. I am all impulse. When I am once excited you will hear burning words. I will then speak with power, and I will certainly crush into atoms the most impregnable strongholds of error. Because, it is not my force, my power, which then makes me speak, but the Lord's. If the Lord chooses to speak through my tongue, then I am all fire, and I can speak not only eloquently, but I can speak the words of pure wisdom and truth."

From early youth Keshub Chunder Sen had great faith in the power of the press. The publications, both in English and the vernaculars, which ceasely flowed from the Brahmo Somaj under him, drew the warm acknowledgments of the Government. His numerous writings and speeches when they are collected will make many volumes. But he had also a great belief in the newspaper. Every morning, regularly he

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read one of the Calcutta daily papers. His idea always was to have a powerful organ in the English language. With this object he founded the *Indian Mirror* in August, 1861, along with some friends. When the Indian Mirror was made over to other hands, he started the *Sunday Mirror*. The *Liberal* and the *New Dispensation* followed. His journalistic activities continued to the very last, and he wrote on almost every subject, avoiding only party politics. Whatever he wrote, he wrote most deliberately and slowly; sometimes one word in five seconds. The speaking was impulsive, the writing was most careful. We have already spoken of the Bengali newspapers which he founded, but he did not very often write for these. His English journals had most of his contributions. Keshub's journals were the models of moderation. No one has ever accused them of the lack of courage and independence, but it is not generally perceived how courteous, kind, and temperate they always were. Keshub made it a point to reproduce in his organs the worst criticisms against himself, and often without any comment. Every one had access to their columns. He never abused men for holding views different from his own. In the largest and truest sense he was the champion of the freedom of the press.

Many people are under the impression that the Brahmo Somaj, like all modern Theistic sects, treats of the important subject of sin in a light, superficial way, holding the sinfulness of man to be a mere fiction, and atonement an act of supererogation. Is it necessary to point out that the Brahmo Somaj of India in the very commencement of its career struggled with a deep sense of sin? Its confessions, its hymns of penitence, its persistent prayers, all bear united testimony to the recognition of this inveterate disease of human nature. But it is no more than a disease. It is not a positive creation, but a derangement of the functions of the spiritual organism, a weakness of the vital powers, the course of healthy nature turned away, remedied as soon as the health and life of the soul are re-established. Man is composed of three parts, so to say. The mere inert inanimate clay of flesh and blood. The physical life and instincts, whatever they may be, which animate the flesh. And the spirit, or mind or conscience, or reason, however it may be called, which is the true child of God. Of these the mere matter, and the mere animal, are common to all sentient beings, and the spirit is proper to man alone. Now the free-will of man is swayed by the material, animal, and spiritual powers together.

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But we all know that the spirit often opposes the material and the animal, and there is a struggle between the three. The will decides every such contest, siding either with the spiritual or the carnal. If the will is strong enough to decide in favor of the spirit and conscience, the result is virtue and righteousness. If the will is weak, and through weakness decides in favor of the carnal and the material, the result is sin. Sin thus resolves itself into the weakness of the will. And as all weakness is negative, signifying the absence of strength, sin loses all essential entity, and like darkness means the negation of the light of the soul. But though perfectly negative in its essence, it assumes a very positive form when suffered to obscure and mislead the mental powers. Hence it will appear that the will is the real seat of sin, and by assenting to the lower cravings of human nature originates unrighteousness. From this it will be evident that so long as the will is free, and the tendencies of the carnal part of man's being are likely to influence it, there is the possibility of sin, and, so long as there is this possibility, man is always liable to fall. We have, therefore, to struggle not only against the actual commission of evil, or the omission of virtue, but against the thousand possibilities of wrong-doing. Passions, motives, determinations, acts, habits that tend to gratify bodily cravings at the expense of the spiritual, all go to make up the sinful character of man. Nothing but the grace of God, obtained through repentance, prayer, faith, dependence, and holy exercise, combined with powerful efforts at self-reformation, can deliver man from the ingrained carnalities, and heavy inertness of his nature. The more he gains in spirituality, the more free he is from the carnal and inanimate parts of his nature, and the nearer he is to salvation. But, however near he be to heaven, there is always the possibility of his committing sin. Sin, therefore, means the proneness of the will to do anything that is against the will of God. And salvation is entire oneness with the spirit and will of God. Salvation is thus never an act but a process. It always tends to be complete, but is never so in this earthly life.

The year 1880 began with a characteristic form of spiritual culture, which Keshub quaintly styled "Pilgrimages to Saints and Prophets."* This phrase has been so largely taken exception to, and so many misrepresentations have been made

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of it, that it is necessary to explain the idea which gave it rise. From the time of his lecture on "Great Men" in 1866, Keshub continually admonished his disciples to behold the Providence of God in history, and in humanity. But he did not place much practical importance upon the mere recognition of the goodness and greatness of historical characters; he meant that his Church should make them "the facts of its spiritual consciousness," absorb and assimilate their examples, principles, and teachings. With this view he proposed in February, 1880, "to promote communion with departed saints among the more advanced Brahmos. With a view to achieve this object successfully, ancient prophets and saints will be taken one after another on special occasions, and made the subject of close study, meditation, and prayer. Particular places will be assigned to which the devotees will resort as pilgrims. There, for hours together, they will try to draw inspiration from particular saints. We believe a spiritual pilgrimage to Moses will be shortly undertaken. Only earnest devotees ought to join." A week was spent in discipline and preparation, at the end of which, with impressive ceremonies and solemn invocations, the devotees concentrated their minds upon the lives and precepts of particular prophets. The life of Moses was first taken up, because he was the eldest prophet of whom there are any distinct records. But in the course of time, Socrates, Buddha, Jesus, Mahammed, Chaitanya followed, till the list came down to Faraday, Carlyle, and Emerson. Everyone will perceive the catholicity of Keshub's ideal of humanity. He never had anything to do either by study or by influence with the system of August Comte. But in this conception of humanity the two great minds of the century seemed to be in clear contact. Between atheistic Positivism, and apostolic Theism, such undesigned coincidence is a singular testimony to truth. All the great men, thus honoured, were accepted either as prophets of religion, or philosophy, or morality, or science, and by intense meditation and study their teachings were realised in spiritual consciousness. This unique idea, though it excited derision amongst those who were pledged to oppose Keshub in everything, was appreciated in unexpected quarters, and among others Mr. Moncure Conway, of South Place Chapel, Finsbury, London, who had gone far in the direction of every species of radical doctrine, wrote a characteristic letter of sympathy he felt for this mode of spiritual culture. The metaphorical name of Pilgrimage given to this religious exercise was, if

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anything, a recommendation to thoughtful minds of the age, while to the unimaginative it has ever remained as a stumbling-block of offence. Keshub explains the whole subject thus:—

"The New Dispensation is subjective. It aims at synthesis, and it aims at subjectivity. It endeavours to convert outward facts and characters into facts of consciousness. It believes that God is an Objective Reality, an Infinite Person, the Supreme Father. In the same manner it believes in the objectivity of all prophets and departed spirits, each a person, each a child of God. But the recognition of the objective side of truth is not the whole philosophy of theology. There is a subjective side as well. This latter demands an equally faithful recognition; nay, it ought to excite much warmer interest. For subjectivity is of the first importance to the wants of the soul. For who among us does not believe in the outward and objective God? And yet, how few among professing Theists realise Divinity in their own hearts? God is not only a Person, but also a character. As a Person we worship Him; His Divine character we must assimilate in our own character. True worship is not completed till the worshipper's nature is converted so as to partake of the nature of Divinity. Worship is fruitless if it does not make us heavenly and divine. The transfer of the outward Deity to subjective consciousness is the maturity of faith, the last fact of salvation. * * * *

In regard to the spirit of departed saints, the same argument holds good. If you simply admit their entity, of what avail is it to you? You have no doubt heard of such a thing as the communion of saints. What is it? Is it the superficial doctrine of objective recognition, or is it the deeper philosophy of subjective fellowship? You must guard yourselves against the evils arising from the mere objective recognition of the world's prophets and saints. Nothing is so easy as to say, O! Jesus, O! Moses. This apprehension of the external reality of great spirits is not communion. There is Christ, here are we; and between us there is a great gulf. There is no attempt to bridge the gulf, and bring about closer relations. Hence is it that Jesus, though good and true, affects not our lives till we realise him within. The Christ of older theologies is the barren outward fact, the dead Christ of history and dogma. But the Christ of the New Dispensation is an indwelling power, a living spirit, a fact of consciousness. It is this philosophy of subjectivity which underlies the Pilgrimages to Saints, as they are called. We have been asked to explain what we mean by these pilgrimages. They are simply practical applications of this principle of subjectivity. As pilgrims we approach the great saints, and commune with them in spirit, killing the distance of time and space. We enter into them and they enter into us. In our souls we cherish them, and we imbibe their character and principles. We are above the popular error which materialises the spirits of departed saints, and clothes them again with the flesh and bones which they have for ever cast away. Nor do we hold these human spirits to be omnipresent. We do not say of them that they fill all space, and are here, there, and everywhere. We believe they still exist, but where they are we cannot tell. Wherever they may be, it is possible for us, earthly pilgrims, if we are only men of faith and prayer, to realise them in

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consciousness. If they are not personally present with us, they may be spiritually drawn into our life and character. They may be made to live and grow in us. . . . This is a normal, psychological progress to which neither science nor theology can take exception. Here is the subject mind, there is the object—a prophet or saint. The subject, by a mysterious though natural process, absorbs the object."

During the anniversary festival of 1880 Keshub Chunder Sen formally announced the advent of the New Dispensation,* both from the pulpit of the *Brahma Mandir,* and in his annual English discourse in the Town Hall of Calcutta. It took no one by surprise, as he had been practically making the announcement for the last three years. It was abundantly clear to the entire public that long before this formal proclamation, the character of the Theism introduced by Keshub Chunder Sen, and the various attendant disciplines, doctrines and ceremonies, adopted from surrounding creeds, showed his movement to be very different from the colourless rationalism of the average Brahmo Somaj. Now and then the latter made strong protests against his teachings, whereas not a few congregations accepted his precepts without question. The fact is, the leader of the Brahmo Somaj of India had such a stupendous personality that these occasional protests, strong as they were, produced no effect upon the public. Keshub himself had great hopes that this factitious opposition must in the course of time die away, and the ascendant truth and fitness of his developments would overspread and permeate the whole Theistic movement in the land. Previous to the year 1878 therefore, though he never ceased to make new spiritual achievements, he was as little aggressive as possible, he did not accentuate the peculiarities of his doctrine, he tried to explain his classifications and ceremonies as much as possible. He was careful and reserved, and discouraged forwardness of expression. He very much hesitated to shock Brahmo prejudices and modes of thinking. He believed that slowly and silently the Brahmo Somaj would reconcile itself with all these special cultures and ideas. But when after the Cooch Behar marriage, a very large and really influential part of the Church, not only rejected his leadership, but took up a position of uncompromising hostility to every great principle he taught, when again year after year, far from any approach to union (for which he secretly waited and longed), his opponents developed a creed that seemed to him little

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different from the cold rationalism of Deistic speculations in other parts of the world, Keshub thought the time had come to draw the line between his followers and the rest of the Brahmo Somaj. He threw off every reserve, and boldly differentiated. He announced the New Dispensation with deliberate formalism and sacramental solemnity. Let no one for an instant imagine, however, that he left the Brahmo name, or dissolved the organisation of his branch of the Brahmo Somaj. On the contray he held the annual Conference of the Brahmo Somaj of India with greater eclât than ever. He unveiled a portrait of Raja Ram Mohan Roy on the 16th January in the Albert Hall with an impressive speech, and suggested that the next thing to perpetuate the memory of the Raja "was the presentation of a medal to be annually given to the best student of Natural Theology and Comparative Religion." But he determined that the Brahmo Somaj of India should be henceforward known as the Church of the New Dispensation, and he wanted to give the New Dispensation as distinctive and as recognisable a character as possible. This character he meant should be most orthodox in form, that ceremonies should form, at least in the beginning, its chief feature. He meant that the Society should retain its old name of the Brahmo Somaj, but its religion should bear the name of the New Dispensation.* Recent achievements of spiritual progress had given him a conscious power, and he felt, like Napoleon, that his "power would fall were he not to support it by fresh achievements. "Conquest," said Napolean, "has made me what I am, and conquest must maintain me." To fresh achievements, therefore, Keshub turned his mind. It has been said, however, his purposes remained the same, he began to achieve these purposes through fresh methods. Yet the change in methods appeared to be so great as to lead, not only Keshub's enemies, but even some of his friends to suspect there was change in purpose and principle. There was a time when Keshub was unfavourable to the introduction of a single flower-garland into the place of public worship. He had cited years ago with warm approval the example of a Bombay Bishop who, before he mounted the pulpit, tore a floral cross with which some of his rituatlistic congregation had decorated a part of the church. But now the Minister of the Brahmo Somaj entered with singular enthusiasm into an endless succession of symbols, celebrations, and ceremonies.

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In fact, these principally composed his new methods. He said the times had changed, and men must not expect him to do and say as he had done before the New Dispensation had been announced. Evidently a profound inner impulse was at work within him, and he had determined to follow its leading in every new direction to which it pointed. The first instance of this new method in the year 1881 was the introduction of the Christian ceremonies of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper in a national garb. Keshub wrote an account of it thus:—

"On Sunday, the 6th March, the ceremony of adapting the sacrament to Hindu life was performed, with due solemnity, in accordance with the principle above set forth. The Hindu apostles of Christ gathered after prayer in the dinner hall, and sat upon the floor upon bare ground. Upon a silver plate was Rice, and in a small goblet was Water, and there were flowers and leaves around both. The minister read the following verses from Luke xxii:—"And he took bread and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me." "Likewise, also the cup after supper, 'saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you."

A prayer was then offered, asking the Lord to bless the sacramental rice and water:—Touch this rice and this water, O! Holy Spirit, and turn their grossly material substance into sanctifying spiritual forces, that they may, upon entering our system, be assimilated to it as the flesh and blood of all the saints in Christ Jesus. Satisfy the hunger and thirst of our souls with the rich food and drink Thou hast placed before us. Invigorate us with Christ-force and nourish us with sainty life. The Lord blessed the rice and He blessed the water. And these were then served in small quantities to those around, and men ate and drank reverently, and the women and children also ate and drank, and they blessed God, the God of prophets and saints.

The New Baptismal ceremony was held in the following June.

The devotees formed a procession, and solemnly moved on, singing a hymn with the accompaniment of the *mridanga* (*khole*), the conch-shell and cymbals, till they reached the bathing *ghat* of the *Kamal Sarabar*, the tank attached to the house of the Minister. The place had been decorated with flowers and evergreens, and the flag of the New Dispensation was waving in the breeze. The devotees took their seats upon the steps of the *ghat;* the minister sat upon a piece of tiger's skin, stretched upon a wooden *Vedi* erected for the occasion. Deep silence prevailed. It was near midday, the torrid sun was burning overhead, when the minister addressed his people as follows:—Beloved brethren, we have come into the land of the Jews, and we are seated on the bank of the Jordan. Let them that have eyes see. Verily, verily, here was the Lord Jesus baptised eighteen hundred years ago. Behold the holy waters wherein was the Son of God immersed. See ye here the blessed Jesus, and by his side John the Baptist, administering the rite of Baptism, nay, behold in the sky above the descent of the Holy Ghost. All three are here present, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, spiritually united. Pilgrim-brothers, mark their union to-day on this hallowed spot, and see how the water shineth in celestial radiance."

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He then explained the meaning of the act of baptism by immersion, and himself with his associates bathed in the tank near which all this took place. These two ceremonies, it is needless to point out, were meant to incorporate the spirit of Christian sacraments into the religion of the New Dispensation. Christian divines were much offended at the liberty taken with their solemn observances, but could not at the same time help perceiving that this was the right way of nationalising the precepts of their faith. Keshub, however, was too sagacious to permit any one-sidedness to be ascribed to his new Church, and the Eucharist had been followed, and the Baptism preceded by the *Hom* ceremony which is essentially a Hindu observance. The Hindus worship Fire as God on such occasions, but he worshipped God in the fire.

"On Tuesday last, the Sanctuary witnessed a new and imposing, and we may add an instructive spectacle. There was a large iron fire-pan in front of the *Vedi;* in an earthen vessel was *ghee* or clarified butter; bundles of sticks and pieces of fire-wood were gathered in one place, and there was a large metallic spoon. Varieties of beautiful and fragrant flowers and evergreens in abundance formed a semi-circle skirting the place where these things were arranged. No one was prepared for such a sight, as none, even among the select few who were present, knew what was going to happen. After the introductory portion of the Service was over, the Minister invoked Divine blessing on the ceremony which was to be performed, and prayed that it might become profitable unto the Church. He then lighted up the fuel before him, and pouring over it clarified butter, produced a brisk fire, which he addressed as a great force. "Thou art not God: we do not adore thee. But in thee dwells the Lord, the Eternal Inextinguishable Flame, the Light of the universe."

The most original, undoubtedly the most touching of these ceremonies was the Ordination of the Apostles of the New Dispensation on the 15th March, 1881. A week afterwards they were sent out on their tour through the country, a tour from which Aghore Nath Gupta, one of the saintliest among Keshub's disciples, never returned. The persons who were ordained as Apostles met at the Minister's domestic sanctuary. Their feet were washed by Kanti Chandra Mittra, the supporter of the missionary families, and wiped by Gour Govind Roy, Upadhyah. Each one of them was then presented with a silver medal, bearing the inscription of Apostolic Brotherhood on one side, and the likeness of a flag on the other. Gour Govind Roy as the priest of the Church administered the vow.

"He presented to the minister a medal, which he reverently accepted and wore on his person. Then followed the presentation of a stick and a scrip, both national symbols of mendicancy. Dressed

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in *gairic*, with head shaved, the Servant of the Apostles (Keshub) humbly received these, and asked for alms. Thereupon, rice and vegetables were put into the small bag, which he held in his hand as a mendicant. The ceremony, which was impressive, and moved many to tears, was the beginning of thirty days of mendicancy, during which the Servant of the Apostles was pledged to live exclusively upon alms, in the shape of rice, dal, salt, oil, vegetables, fruits, &c., with which kind friends might favour him. A few more medals were then presented, and there was the laying on of hands in each case, indicative of Apostolical Succession. The ceremony concluded with a charge to the Apostles, prayers, and benediction."

We call this ceremony very important because of the place which Keshub claims for himself in his own apostolic body. After the forms were gone through, Keshub gave the following charge to the apostles:—

"Honour me not as your master. I am your servant, I am your friend. You are my masters. Therefore, what treatment a servant may expect from his masters and a friend from his friends, I do expect from you. I am your God-sent servant, and my Father hath often told me that if I leave your service my salvation will be hindered. Therefore, do not in mercy remove me from the post of your servant. My Heavenly Master hath employed me in your service, therefore I must be lowly, and have no cause to be puffed up with vanity. I do not send you as the great prophet Jesus sent his disciples. Our mutual relations are of different kind. I am only one of your band. You are sent forth by the world's prophets and apostles. You and I are sent forth by Jesus, Sakya Muni, Chaitanya and other great prophets. They have sent us forth into the world to preach their truths. Taking the dust of their feet I tell you these words. You are not my apostles, but both you and I are their apostles. They are our spiritual fathers and grandfathers. We are born in the line of their generation. We are twice-born in their inspiration. Before I acknowledged you as apostles, those heavenly prophets had ordained and sent you as such. I only repeat their words to their disciples. In this very room, in your hearts, those God-sent prophets are present, and they call you to your work. They tell you to take into heart the sufferings of sinful and sorrowful men. Your brothers and sisters are sinking in the sea of atheism and impiety. How can you be at ease when you see all this? The spirits of Jesus and Moses and Chaitanya still speak to you with warmth. You must not remain cold when you hear their fiery words. Our Supreme Mother, the Mother of all Prophets also commands you thus:—"Apostles of the New Dispensation, go and save My children. Lo! scepticism and vice are destroying them. Run to their rescue with all your might. If you have any love for your Heavenly Mother, go and save Her children." O! Apostles, obey the Divine call, and run straight to your work.

Remember your creed,—one God, one scripture and one family of prophets. Love the one true God, and worship Him every day. By daily worship make your lives holy. Attain communion with the saints of heaven inwardly in your minds. Eat their flesh and drink their blood, and turn your bodies into vessels of holiness. In your lives show the reconciliation of perfect wisdom, perfect asceticism, perfect love, perfect devotion, perfect conscience, perfect joy, and perfect holiness. Be not satisfied with the fraction of any

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one virtue. Do not covet the prosperity and pleasures of this world. Preserve your lives with the food that comes from mendicancy. Be happy in others' happiness and sorry in others' sorrow. Regard all mankind as one family. Hate not, nor regard as aliens, men of other castes and other religions. Be ascetics, but live in the world in the midst of other men, and let them live in you. And let both, them and yourselves, live conjointly in God. There is salvation in unity, and peace in unity. Brother-apostles, seek not gold or silver. Be ye mendicants. Take no thought for the morrow. He, that thinketh of food and raiment, is an unbeliever. God is your all in all. Ye shall desire nothing except the feet of the Lord. Ye shall be guided by Him, eating the bread which He giveth, and not the tainted food of the world, which defileth both the body and the soul. Sleep on the bed that the Lord provideth for you. Go in all directions, East and West, North and South, and preach the New Dispensation. Let no regard for men cause you to mix with the Dispensation what does not belong to it. If the people of any country do not want to hear you, shake off the dust of your feet, and go elsewhere. Be not angry, be not vengeful. If any men meet you as enemies, let the peace of your prayers descend on their heads. Be poor and patient in spirit. Conquer contention with peace. Be touched with pity when you see the pride and vanity of those who are in error. Let peace and purity flow into the place where you go. If you go into a village, let the people there feel that a new light hath descended upon them. Glory doth not lie in pride, but in clean conscience. Never in your mind wish for the pleasures of life, but if God giveth you any happiness accept it with thankfulness and humility. If you take not the joys and pleasures which He giveth and bear not the pain which cometh from Him, ye are equally rebellious. Never dare to dictate to the Lord. Say not "give unto me pain" or "give unto me pleasure." Whatever happeneth in God's Kingdom, doth happen by His will. To-day you are here, to-morrow there; to-day in honour, to-morrow in dishonour. Be not afraid, neither be unsteady. For what God causeth to take place is for your good. Do not press men to give you money or food. The Infinite God has taken charge of you. Do His work with hearts full of faith. He that worketh not is not worthy of reward. Only do the Lord's work and seek His kingdom, and He will give you what is necessary both here and in heaven. Let your faith be firm, and shrink not if men wish to prove it. Do nothing that may lead men and women in future to fall into error and superstition. If by the example of your sin and slothfulness others are led to live sinfully, you will have to answer for it. Whenever you see vice struggling against virtue and impurity tempting chastity, there fight like true heroes, and establish the victory of virtue and chastity. As you cut open the snares of the world from your own souls, so cut them away from the souls of others. Apostles of the New Dispensation what you have hitherto learnt secretly from your God, go and proclaim now with the sound of the trumpet. Manifest new love, new truth, new inspiration, and draw all men and women into the fold of the New Dispensation."*

* These and the following extracts are made from the New Dispensation Journal, started in March 1881, and written entirely by Keshub at the time.

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These ceremonies were accompanied at short intervals by vows of various kinds, and Keshub also multiplied different orders of devotees. The first vow taken was the vow of poverty, administered, as we have already seen, upon Keshub himself. For weeks together Keshub literally lived on the almsgiving of his congregation. He had many times had it in his mind to give over charge of his affairs to his children, and spend his life on the benefactions of the public. He commenced so early as 1875, begging from door to door among the families who lived in the *Bharat Asram*, and, with the rice and vegetables thus collected, cooked his own food, when the *Vairagya* movement commenced. But he did not make any display of what he had done. He did not want to depend upon a temporary impulse in entering upon such a life, he wanted to "reduce alms-giving to a system." He aimed at a reconciliation of the life of the house-holder and the mendicant. His idea was to find out and assign some source of income to the family, and for his personal wants to depend upon the almsgiving of the public. He made at different times various plans for this purpose, and the vow of poverty now taken was an important one amongst them all. Gifts of rice, vegetables, and sweetmeats were made in abundance by the congregation, some kindly-disposed Christian Missionaries sent boxes of biscuits, and an appeal for a gift of the Bible was also readily responded to. "The Vow of Poverty" says Keshub "seems to have worked well, considering the regular and ungrudging supply of alms from day to day, and the very generous appreciation it evinces on the part of the donors. Only the superfluous sweetmeats occasionally presented have been somewhat costly." Keshub himself practised the virtue of almsgiving largely. He freely gave whenever men's poverty excited his charitable feelings; and whenever any sums were placed at his disposal for this purpose he chose the poor of every community, Christians, Hindus, and Muhammedans alike. He distributed ice in very hot weather to the Brahmo missionaries, and sweets, pulses, and cool water to wayfarers. Sometimes he gave away amounts of money which he could ill spare; any scene of suffering moved him deeply. He modestly subscribed to every charitable object which interested him, often anonymously. To those who knew the difficulties of his circumstances, this open-handed charity was a singular feature of his character. When the members of the Salvation Army (with whom he had no theological sympathy), not long before his

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death, were being cruelly prosecuted by the City authorities for preaching in the public squares, he personally attended the crowded Police Court, with a cheque in his pocket, to pay down the fine if any was imposed. It is a curious fact that some of his bitter opponents, who wanted to ruin his cause, had the effrontery to come to his house on one occasion with their subscription book to solicit his aid in support of the *Sadharan Somaj*. Perhaps they came to try his temper. They were disappointed, however, when he quietly took the book, and subscribed a sum of money under the title of "সত্যমেব জয়তে" "Truth shall triumph!" But notwithstanding all the partiality he had for mendicancy, Keshub never countenanced the sin of idleness in religious men; on the contrary, it will appear shortly that he never worked so hard as when he established the vow of poverty.

Another important vow established was what Keshub called "the vow of self-surrender."

"Three men were admitted into the order. They are men of the world. They attend office, and by secular work acquire money. They are not missionaries; they do not discharge priestly functions. Yet they wish to act upon the ascetic principle of "self-surrender," and would give their substance to the Mother Church. They would labour and earn money at the sweat of the brow. But their earnings they would lay at the feet of the Church, with the fullest resignation as becomes her children and servants."

In connection with this order, he established a small "*Bidhan* Deposit Bank" for the devotees to bring in their monthly earnings.

"They deposit the money as soon as it comes into their hands. After it has been placed in the Sanctuary and sanctified by the Lord, a part of the money is given back to each depositor with instructions for its disposal. Contributions to the Church, charity to the poor, allowance to mother and wife, liquidation of debt, are some of the prescribed items of expenditure. No depositor is allowed to draw more than has been credited to his account. The instructions of the Church must be strictly followed. Upon these conditions money is received and spent by the Church of the New Dispensation for the benefit of its stock. Those only who take the vow of self-surrender are welcome."

Nor did Keshub confine his vows and orders to men. In the next month, that is April, he instituted a Sisterhood.

"The Church is incomplete till it has formed a Sisterhood. Numerous are the agencies at work for the elevation and reformation of man. But the daughter of God is as much in need of discipline and training as the son of God. Our Church is therefore striving after female edification. Year after year our sisters have been subjected to higher forms of discipline, and trained to prefer simplicity, poverty and devotion to false refinement, and the gaieties and frivolities of

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the world. They have not made much progress yet; but they are slowly growing in faith and prayer. We sincerely and fervently trust the more advanced among them may grow into a Ministering Sisterhood and not only set examples of female poverty and devotion, but formally assume the functions of female servants unto their less devout sisters. The way in which this work of spiritual discipline has gone on for some time past is not uninteresting. Vows have been instituted, embracing varieties of duty and discipline, which are solemnly adopted in the Sanctuary, and kept up for a certain length of time. These Vows enjoin meditation, abstemiousness, study of character, charity, kindness to lower animals, nursing of children, cleanliness and sanitation. On Tuesday last eleven ladies were solemnly initiated into different holy orders. The Vows of the first order we give below:—Chanting of 108 Divine Names, and Homage to Saints and Prophets. Morning Readings:—*Rig Veda* texts. Mid-day Readings:—*Bhagvat*. Evening Readings:—Bible. Giving water and *sherbat* to devotees. Cooking her own food. Covering the head with a piece of cloth while in the Temple. Solitary meditation, and singing, with the accompaniment of the *Ektara*, songs of the New Dispensation, and other hymns. Short family prayer with the children. Hearing life of *Chaitanya*.

The younger girls and those who are unmarried, had suitable Vows administered to them. May the grace of the Living God, the Supreme Mother, descend on our sisters, and lift them from the bondage of the world!"

The next vow that we shall record here is one meant for boys and young men. Keshub writes thus in May:—

"It is proposed to organise an Order of Students of the New Dispensation, for the benefit, chiefly of those young men who, either at home or in schools, are engaged in cultivating the intellect and acquiring knowledge. . . . The order was lately announced, and on Sunday last, 11 young men appeared in the Sanctuary as candidates for the Preparatory Vow, which was instituted on the occasion. In the course of the service the Minister explained the advantages of the Vow, and then proceeded to administer it to the candidates."

Thus at this time, Keshub concentrated all his efforts to make the idea of the New Dispensation a distinctive reality, and that mainly by vows, orders and ceremonies. His characteristic procedure was, whenever he conceived an idea, to work it out to its extremest limit and systematically impress it upon men's minds by repeating it in endless forms, and through every possible means in his power. In all the reforms and revivals, in all the doctrines, disciplines, he had ever introduced, he had adopted this energy of extremes. He never believed in the reservation of power. And now he applied all his resources to the establishment of the idea of the New Dispensation. The tremendous amount of mental and physical work through which he went from day to day since the announcement in January 1881, was a matter of

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wonder to us all. He wrote the New Dispensation paper single-handed, and borrowed a large number of heavy books on primitive Christian theology and Hinduism which he read most industriously to produce articles and extracts. The daily worship in the domestic sanctuary which he conducted seldom lasted less than two hours. He conducted the weekly worship at the *Mandir*. The whole day was spent in various kinds of duties requiring the most constant attention, and the Minister and disciples often sat up till past midnight. Over and above all this work, he organised singing parties which paraded the streets of Calcutta for three or four hours in the evening, and visited every obscure and unclean quarter of the town. The labour of this undertaking was a serious exhaustion. "Ordinarily," says the Singing Apostle Troylokya Nath in his *Keshava Charita*,* "he had not the power to walk a mile. But when out in the singing expeditions, he stood and walked sometimes for three hours together with no covering for his feet. Keshub, as a mendicant in his *gairic* garments, walked from door to door of the city, and diffused among all men sweetness of God's love. In the heat of *Baisakh*, perspiring in every pore, crowds surrounding him, the bad smells from noxious drains choking the breath, he never seemed to feel any fatigue. Generally, one or two drunkards joined the party, and followed it with their wild pranks without being able to cause interruption. Sometimes the citizens adorned him and the other singers with garlands of flowers, and sprinkled them with rosewater." On one occasion a curious accident happened to the party. They had entered an oil-manufacture's shop, and as they commenced singing with the accompaniment of their drums and cymbals, a powerful bullock which worked the oil-machine got enraged, and breaking from its stall furiously charged the holy minstrels. The undevout disorder, and in the general stampede that followed, the beast could not do much mischief. The oil-manufacturer and his good wife with many apologies brought back the frightened apostles, but in the hymns, which they were subsequently persuaded to sing, they had to give up the use of their drum and brass instruments. Keshub had a constitutional affection for mendicants and madmen, when they were of a religious cast. Some lunatics were his regular correspondents, and sent weekly despatches which he now and then read aloud with great *gusto* to his friends. Some invaded his house, and kept

*Biography in Bengali.

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up a continued hubbub of song and ejaculation. One or two sane men were converted into lunacy after hearing his sermons and open-air addresses. In fact, the madness of such men was typical to his mind of spiritual inebriation, and he wrote some interesting compositions under the pseudonym of *Pagal* (Lunatic). Mendicant singers of the *Vaishnava* order, oily, top-knotted, half-naked, were the delight of his heart. On Sunday afternoons they besieged his study, and sung enthusiastically in long chorus of *Prem* and *Vairagya* (love and asceticism). Sometimes he secretly visited their uncouth settlements in the outskirts of the city, sat with them on the same mat, and made inquiries about their mode of life. Keshub had a great wish to found wandering musical parties after the model of these men. In fact, every form of religion among the poorer and lower orders of the people had his deep sympathy, and he aspired to make the New Dispensation essentially the religion of the poor. Flags, and letter-heads, plates and cups, and domestic utensils of all kinds were inscribed with the flags and mottoes of the New Dispensation; he left no means untried to impress the new name upon the popular mind.

These ceaseless labours, and various anxieties brought on an attack of diabetes in the beginning of 1882. It is believed, not without reason, that he had the disease in an incipient condition before. Keshub's personal appearance, however, made the suspicion of any wasting internal disease, impossible. An accomplished American actor, quoted before, who came out to this country some years ago, said "Keshub Chunder Sen certainly was the handsomest man I saw in India. He was my beau ideal of an Othello 'make-up.' With a grand, imposing, athletic figure, a noble bearing, he combined an expressive dignity which reminded one of the Patrician Roman." He was full six feet high, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, with a powerful form, latterly growing into corpulency. He had a commanding forehead, a radiant face, fine complexion, and eyes that flashed with inner light. From youth upwards, being constitutionally short-sighted, he wore gold-mounted spectacles which came to form a part of his features, and lent refinement to his noble face. Men often noticed the peculiar youthfulness of his appearance, and even English officials, generally reticent, complimented him on his habitual cheerfulness. Keshub had a strange light in his look. Few could stand the glare of his ardent gaze, when he chose to look any one fully in the face. But this he seldom did. He

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habitually restricted himself within the innate composure of his gracious presence. Only when delivering his rare utterances before vast assemblies, he turned upon them the full lightning of his kindled eyes. And then, as Emerson would say, "the spirit orbed itself" in his face, and his face was as eloquent as his words. Many connoisseurs of features have said he had an essentially German countenance. The lips were thin and firm set, the chin prominent in its powerful curve, the jaws massive, and the stiff little moustache, neatly matched in size the upper lip. Keshub's step was majestic, his whole countenance regal. His head was crowned with bright locks of luxuriant hair, combed straight down with a simple grace, and then parted on both sides of the temple. He had a great depth and power of voice. When he spoke loud, thousands could hear him from the furthest corners of vast halls. When he spoke in his lowest quietest tones, as in the *Brahma Mandir*, he was equally audible ; his voice fell restfully upon the congregation like some hidden spring of water in the mountains. His sentiments and voice were like some celestial poetry set to fitting music. We like to remember him as he stood addressing his anniversary sermon to a mixed audience of Hindus and Europeans in the Town Hall of Calcutta ; his stalwart form erect, towering above the seated assembly ; his refined spiritual countenance calm and intense. His long massive arm raised, his great figure swelling with suppressed impulses. His eyes in full blaze, his lips on fire, hurling sentences and thoughts that filled his audience with awe, his mighty voice traversing from end to end in that great edifice. He indeed looked like a prophet, gifted with the grace of form and spirit alike. Who shall forget the pure sweet dignity of his presence as he sat on the pulpit of the *Brahma Mandir* in his simple costume, the numerous congregation above and around still like a midnight forest. To look at him was a blessing, to hear his voice a comfort and an exultation. His presence called to mind everything that was true, good or great. *

His habits, when not positively austere, were exceedingly simple. He strongly set his face against the growing taste for wearing European costume, and would avoid, without making any fuss, every article that had any symptom of

*Yielding to the wish of numerous readers, we give a likeness. It is the best that could be got in India, but it does not do justice to the subject. P. C. M.

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fashionableness about it. Coarse, common-place *dhoties*, inelegant up-country slippers satisfied him; and herbs, pulses, and milk were his food. Yet to avoid singularity, when at public meetings, or when he visited Europeans, he used other kinds of clothing. He gives an account of his daily habits, in which he includes the other apostles:—

"Here is a plain narrative of what our apostolic brethren do. Immediately upon rising from the bed, they remember the Lord, and trustfully cast themselves upon His care. After a cursory glance over the morning papers they have their daily bath and ablution in the *Kamal Saravar*, or in pipe water, during which, sometimes, baptismal ejaculations are uttered. A hasty breakfast follows, consisting of gram and fruits and milk, if available. The doors of the Sanctuary, which has been just cleaned by the sisters who have change of it, are opened, and the bell rings announcing the time of worship. The devotees, who live mostly in the neighbourhood of the Lily Cottage, hasten towards the Sanctuary, and take their seats, each in his own prescribed place, and upon his own prescribed carpet. Every day the Minister has to conduct service, which lasts for two hours, and sometimes for three, and even four hours. This is the chief thing in the day, the soul's principal meal, out of which cometh nourishment, spiritual pabulum for the individual and the Church. Service closes generally between 11 and 12 noon. As soon ss it is over, our friends repair to the cottage in the south-western corner of the Minister's residence, and there they cook their own food, which consists chiefly of rice and vegetables. As cooking goes on, which takes generally an hour, the *Upadhyah* reads select passages from the *Srimadvagavat* and other books, or conversation is carried on in connection with some one or other of the leading topics of the day. A dispersion follows, each going upon his respective errand. These men of the New Dispensation have a variety of occupations, such as writing articles for the journals and magazines connected with the movement, collection of alms and promised contributions in aid of the mission, and for the support of missionary families, collection and administration of charitable funds, visitation and ministration, lectures and discourses at public meetings, supervision of printing and construction, purchase of provisions and other needful things, cultivation of fellowship with Hindoo and Christian brethren, reading, conferences, &c., besides office work, such as correspondence, account, sale of books and tracts. In the evening some are engaged in solitary devotional exercises with the *Ektara*, in the Sanctuary or elsewhere, which continue for an hour or two. The friends meet again after supper in the Minister's study. Here for hours, when the neighbourhood is hushed in sleep, conversation embracing a variety of profitable and interesting subjects is carried on, terminating sometimes at 1 a.m. late in the night."

Great as his influence was, Keshub Chunder Sen was at times intensely unpopular, and never so much as after the Cooch Behar marriage, and during the working out of the New Dispensation. The real and apparent irregularities of the marriages did not so much account for this as some of

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his natural dispositions. His manners were gentle and dignified enough, but he lacked in the social quality commonly called "gush." His shyness was almost morbid. Before strangers and opponents, before critics and men of the world he often sadly failed to express himself, nay, grew positively awkward. This curious, natural disadvantage contrasted with his great position and talents, was never construed aright, and always mistaken as vanity, conceit, and coldness. The mistaken opinion now and then became so prevalent that he was obliged to explain his real nature in the eighth chapter of the *Jeevan Veda* often quoted before. Before his own intimate friends he would sometimes talk like a child, out of the fulness and simplicity of his soul. And thus every day he talked for hours, absolutely without self-constraint, or any estimate of the capacity of his hearer. Many times in the day he would effervesce with jokes and pleasantries of all sorts, directed, among other objects, to the original characters who surrounded him. He would repeatedly burst into the loud guffaws of the most genuine laughter, hearing which some people in England once remarked "how light-hearted these Hindus are!" At other times he would transport the little company in his study by the strange power of his sentiments, expressed in a sublimity of language that hushed all criticism. But before strangers and opponents he was not only taciturn, but sometimes most ungainly. He was not able to resent an affront. He had not the power of saying a word in self-defence when violently assailed for shortcomings he had never committed. In England he was confronted by a large-limbed, demonstrative Irishman, belonging to the Government opium traffic, the defects of which he had exposed in one of his public addresses. He backed out of the difficulty as best as he could, and used to describe the encounter with much retrospective horror. Miss——a young Englishwoman who came out to this country as a reformer, had, like many other unmarried female philanthropists, a temper made of dynamite and gun-cotton. One evening when Keshub had gone to pay her an obeisance, she treated him to a piece of high—seasoned eloquence which made him dumb with fright and shame. Another young lady who was employed in his household was a daily terror to him. He positively fled at her approach, but she made raids into his study, and into his retreats, and inflicted upon him language which other men would not have tolerated for an instant. A host of people from all parts of the world annually crowded to Calcutta, and repaired to Lily Cottage to

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pay their respects to the great Indian reformer, and take observations of him. Though everyone had the most unrestricted access to him, yet he felt often the impulse to beat a hasty retreat at the announcement of complimentry visitors. He could not always escape, however, and sat out the long interviews in a half-simpering, stolid, uncomfortable mood. If his interlocutor was a man of intelligence and culture, not lavish in or expectant of personal compliments, if he was productive of large general ideas, Keshub might be drawn out into communicativeness. Thus treated he would soon warm up into geniality, and enrapture his auditor with the wonderful flow of his talk. But very few in this country possessed the art of drawing him out. The present writer has been a witness of many interviews with eminent men from foreign parts. Though these visitors came pre-occupied with his great fame, yet the actual conversations held were not calculated to impress them most favourably. Some set him down as positively mediocre, some as mystical and unsettled, and a large number, among whom might be included his own countrymen, decided that he was preternaturally conceited. Only one or two went away with adequate impressions of his genius and talent. Even to his friends and relatives he was at times exceedingly enigmatical. To sudden and unexpected out-pourings of confidence he would reply with freezing monosyllables. To not a few he was simply grim and stern, especially if there was any moral delinquency in the case. To some he was most studiously ambiguous, cold, polite, distant, particulary if he suspected any intention to purloin his confidence. And to none was he vocally demonstrative, or gushingly amiable. Many of them reiterated the venerable Devendra's complaint:—"I have laid *myself* bare before him, but cannot get at *his* mind." All this does not make a man popular. Then again Keshub Chunder Sen was a bad correspondent. To most letter-writers he was absolutely unfathomable. His correspondents, unless there were exceptional reasons, had to content themselves with miserly half-sheets, which he seldom filled from top to bottom. In his earlier years, we remember, he used to correspond more liberally, but as he gained in years, experience, and thought, he scrupulously economised his epistolary powers. One sometimes came across eminent men who complained of this. Among others, Francis William Newman, the English Theist, sometimes alluded with much disfavour to Keshub's "divinely absorbed habits." One noticeable feature of his occasional correspondence was the time and deliberation he spent on his letters. Writing a letter

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or an article, he composed word after word, at great intervals, of deep thought, and now and then tore up in despair what he had so tardily produced. He seemed like one intensely conscious of responsibility in every thing that came from his pen, and this partly accounted for the paucity of the result. Keshub now and then apologised for his imperfection in this respect, but no doubt it made him unpopular in certain quarters. It has been often said that a timely word from him could set right many misunderstandings, and check evil reports. But he obstinately refused to say that word. He had great faith in the ultimate triumph of truth and justice, and scorned to say anything in vindication of his own character. Another cause of his unpopularity was the obstinate determination with which he refused to take any man's counsel. He acknowledged and recognised no earthly master, though he professed to learn from everybody. No one could persuade him to take a course of action, and no one could persuade him to give it up, when he had chosen to take it. He never made it a secret that he walked by a light vouchsafed to him from above. He seldom cared to ask any man's advice, or obey it when offered unasked. Sometimes he would perhaps consult the merest outsider in a matter of worldly duty, but his intimate friends rarely enjoyed that honour. And hence in some important undertakings which he commenced, he had the nominal, and not the real adherence of his followers. This, however, pained him much. For though Keshub was chary of communicating confidence, he valued the privilege of receiving it. He felt he had an absolute right to the innermost heart of his friends, and as to his own heart and motives, though he knew he was not communicative, and he had his reasons for it, he claimed the most implicit trust. This he often complained he did not get. The result of it was that he began and carried out some of his greatest projects without letting any one know beforehand, and without courting any assistance from anybody. The more serious the undertaking was, the less his friends knew about it beforehand. But to their credit be it said that whether they comprehended him or not, as soon as they found out what he wished, they readily advanced to help him, though that help, in the ignorance of motives, was frequently wide of the mark. He always accepted the help, and became somewhat more communicative afterwards. Many openly called this obstinacy, some set it down as egotism, and very few liked it in their hearts. He had his own estimate of the

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value of such criticisms, and was inexorable in his principle. If help came, he would take it, nay, he secretly expected it, and demanded it, but he would not openly court it, nor divulge his plans to anybody, until circumstances brought them to the notice of the public. Another cause of Keshub's uppopularity was his rigorous stoicism, his apostolical piety in an age of self-indulgence and scepticism. He and his followers studiously kept aloof from the rage of fashions, looseness of manners, and wreck of convictions, characteristic of his times. His rigid ideals undoubtedly moulded the rising race, but they also undoubtedly made him unpopular.

Keshub seldom took much outward notice of the personal wants and discomforts of his friends the Brahmo Missionaries, who depended upon him with their families to a very large extent. The constitution of the Brahmo Somaj of India was such that the sorrows and needs of these missionaries were never fully relieved by the public, and a great deal hung upon the personal supervision and sympathy of the leader. How true and deep that sympathy was, every devoted worker of the Brahmo Somaj must testify. Yet Keshub's exterior often belied that fact. He was never known to watch a sick-bed. He rarely made any direct inquiries into the private circumstances, and individual inconveniences of his intimate disciples, yet he kept his eyes and ears so open that he knew everything. Everybody carried reports to him unasked, and he elicited information by various indirect means. He rarely visited the houses of those who were the most constant attendants at his own house. He had an inveterate dislike to make the least parade of his affections and good-wishes, particularly in regard to his dearest friends. Men, for these reasons, often accused him of hard-heatedness, and his followers of servility. But the latter were so profoundly convinced of his unuttered affection, that outward show ceased to be important to them. And his own principles in this matter were entirely unaffected by ill-natured criticism. External civilities and attentions were in his eyes inconsiderable virtues for which a great many men among his assistants had special aptitude. For instance, some among them had rare gifts in the ministry of sick-beds, others in attending to the daily wants of the apostolic workers and their families, others again in polite attentions and personal courtesy. He solemnly assisgned to them such duties. He felt it was his office to educate these men in their respective duties, and distribute each form of the needed ministrations to workers especially

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called and appointed for the purpose. He discovered and formulated the principles of these different departments of charitable work, and left it to his colleagues to work out the details. He wanted to be looked upon as the main channel through which these beneficent efforts flowed, while his practical energies were devoted to the general work of direction, guidance, and spiritual advancement. Not that he never meant to pay personal attention to his disciples, sometimes he charmed them by his private friendship, but he wanted them to repose more exalted expectations in him, and look for minor services to those who had taken up that kind of work. Keshub's inward attachment and intense concern for his little community were sometimes unexpectedly evidenced when a calamity or death took place in the neighbourhood. For instance, when Brother Aghore Nath died in December 1881, his grief on the occasion was so spontaneous and uncontrollable, that there could be little doubt, next to the bereaved widow and orphans, he was the most deeply affected. Nevertheless it must be admitted that his outward indifference to suffering contributed a large element of his unpopularity. The public, however, should take note of the fact that this charge of indifference was not only brought by some of his friends, but now and then by members of his own family. When Mrs. Sen, or the children fell ill, Keshub was not unfrequently found fault with, because he personally paid but little attention to their ailments. The fact is, that in this, as in other cases, he expected those in charge of the families, to look to all physical requirements, while he ministered to the spiritual wants of the community. But somehow or other, Keshub cultivated the peculiarity of a seeming inattention to the wants of those who depended upon him, and the public accused him of courting affection, but offering none. Uncommon men are least common in the way they dispose of their affections, and it will never do to judge them by the conventional rules of courtesy and propriety. Keshub, it may be freely conceded, had his singularities, and his angularities also. But none, who has studied him, trust him, as you could trust no other man. The recipient of the most conflicting confidences and jarring secrets, of a dreadful nature sometimes, he was faithful to everybody who loved him, and had therefore to be reserved and careful, where others, whose relations were less manifold, could afford to be open. It sometimes happened, however, that those who complained loudly of his coldness were the most forward to give him

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their unquestioning faith at critical times. The innate friendliness of his nature, we will soon have occasion to illustrate as we proceed.

The reader who has studied his injuctions to the various orders of devotees, and to the apostles of the New Dispensation, could not fail to notice the "magisterial" tone in which they are delivered. He became more and more authoritative towards his latter years, and he openly said that the authority belonged not to the lower, but the higher self in him. The man who never expressed a direct wish in regard to his most intimate friend, now became a legislator, and the laws he gave he meant to make perfectly binding. He meets the charge thus:—

"Father O'Neill accuses the men of the New Dispensation of being 'magisterial.' We plead guilty to the charge. But if we are asked why we are magisterial, we reply, we cannot help it. There is something in every member of the New Church, even in the humblest, which must speak and dictate like a magistrate, like one having authority. This inward something is above ourselves. It is not self; it cannot be man. It is divine. It is more than a magistrate, more than any earthly potentate. It is the very God of heaven and earth, speaking in and through man."

This magisterial authority, it will be observed, Keshub claims not only for himself, but on behalf of "every member of the New Church, even the humblest." But practically it applied to him alone, and hence it was another cause of his later unpopularity. Men tried to apply strictly and literally to himself the rules he applied to others. And as in the case of a spiritual man like him, a too literal application of outward rules could not be justly made, he was accused, as in the case of Cooch Behar marriage, of an inconsistent violation of his own ordinances. Much unpleasant feeling was the consequence. It was disadvantageous in another way. Keshub's followers, ever on the alert to imitate him, readily imbibed the "magisterial spirit;" and, as they all claimed the same extent of piety, they bitterly accused each other of the violation of apostolical rules. The greater the number of detailed injunctions, the greater the mutual criticism. The disagreements among his apostolical colleagues alluded to before, gradually took a most fatal form in this manner. Keshub demanded an immunity from such rules of criticism in his own case, because he declared that in every duty of life he was guided by the direct commandment of God. Besides it was a favourite saying of his, that the legislator might claim exemption from the outward authority of his own laws, especi-

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ally, as he maintained, that at no time had he departed from the spirit of the ordinances. This was his contention in the marriage controversy, and also afterwards. He readily conceded to the other Brahmo missionaries the privilege of receiving inspiration when they sought it, but he held that they did not on all occasions seek it, or walk by the light of Heaven. Not being spiritually minded enough for this, they should, he thought, be guided by rules and injunctions, sanctioned by him, under Divine guidance, in the name of the community.* This was the principle of church government

*Keshub very distinctly laid down he had an official position, as the Minister of the Church, and he had a private position apart from his ministerial duties. In the latter capacity he was like other Brahmos, and the community was fully justified not to sanction everything he did. But as their Minister, appointed by the hand of Providence, the whole congregation and community were to accept his authority and follow his precepts. He specified the subjects on which he was to be implicitly followed. The progress and success of the present Dispensation; realisation of the Spirit God and immortal life; honour to the saints and prophets of the world; prayer; *Yoga* or communion; the reconciliation of primitive asceticism and modern civilisation; the reconciliation of philosophy and faith. These were at first the subjects on which he demanded to be obeyed by the community. But the range of subjects gradually widened, till they embraced almost every duty of life. It was not possible, he said, that everybody should understand his teachings, but when they failed to understand him they were still to follow, not in blindness, but in the loving submission of faith. It must be confessed, however, that even his most faithful followers did not know how to apply his teachings to their lives. That in his precepts as Minister he was entitled to faith and obedience, it was not possible to question. But how to distinguish his public and private life? Had Keshub any private life? He distinctly says that his eating, sleeping, and his every daily act were regulated by the commandment of God. Not only so, but he laid down "magisterial rules," from the impulses of the "higher self," regulating the personal, domestic, social, and religious life of the devotees of his Church. The *New Samhita*, and the rules of apostolic life, promulgated on the commencement of the Bengali new year in April 1883, are undoubtedly of this description. Can it then for a moment be imagined that he laid down these rules for others, without himself meaning to obey them? He without doubt wanted to make his household a model household, and every relation of life, as discharged by himself, an example for others to follow. Where then is the distinction between his private and his public functions? His faithful disciples felt they should follow him absolutely, in every capacity of his life, in every detail of his conduct. But then arose the difficulty. Was this possible? His circumstances were so different, his duties so peculiar, his nature so exalted, that it was most dangerous for every man to do as he did. Hence many bewilderments ensued. Each one could but imitate him according to his own standpoint, his own idiosyncracy; and though each imita-

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he meant to work out since the announcement of the New Dispensation. But this new principle of church government did not promise to work well. In the first place the apostles, whose unanimous consent alone was authoritative, could seldom agree on any important subject, their personal attitudes towards each other being very undesirable. Whatever, therefore, was done towards controlling the body was attempted to be done by himself, and his authority. In the next place Keshub was conscious that any rule he wanted to apply to refractory members, some of them secretly applied to him, and if he claimed to be free from the rules of criticism, because he walked by the light of the Spirit, they raised exactly the same plea. So his own authority, high as it was,

tion was faithful as far as it went, the several imitations did not go far enough to make a homogeneity. The reflections were all broken, and disunited. The disciples, therefore, quarrelled very much among themselves in their estimate of the master, and there were strong mutual accusations about unfaithfulness to the standards of life laid down by him. Each one claimed he was the most faithful, and the others were not. He who followed the general ideas and principles preached by the Minister, and did not in private life closely imitate his personal ways, was criticised severely, as one seeking his own convenience, not whole-hearted in his discipleship. And he who tried to do as Keshub did in every detail of conduct was criticised as one who missed the spirit in following the letter. Keshub marked these perplexities but could not remove them. He only emphasised his own self-estimate. In 1875, when in his Town Hall lecture he announced the New Dispensation, he said "If you believe in God, believe that He has not commissioned me to be an infallible guide unto you. . . The very creed my mouth has preached to-day, disowns me, and points to God alone as the source of all truth. If you exalt me as a teacher, and then falling down before me accept every utterance of mine as a divine message, you do so at the risk of debasing yourselves, and jeopardising your highest interests. . . .All that I contend for is this, that whatever truth there may be in my teaching should be accepted and followed, not for my sake, but for the sake of the truth itself." In 1881, when sending out the Apostles of the New Dispensation, in his solemn charge, he thus said:—"Do you not know that I am a vile sinner? What I say on this point is true, believe me. You are not my disciples, you are my friends, my valued coadjutors. Do not imitate me. Imitation is death, it is blind obedience, it is slavery. . . .May my Father be your Teacher and Guide. Let no one regard me as his *Guru*. My entreaty is let no one learn anything for my sake, or for the sake of my intellect. Whatever I say, whether it be true or not, ascertain it by appealing to the Spirit of God. Accept or reject it according to His direction." Keshub Chunder Sen thus made an esoteric reconciliation of the sense of his own unworthiness, with an over-powering sense of his own authority. This golden truth of reconciled self-estimates he could not, however, impart to his community. They either thought too much, or too little of his authority.

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was not equally final with every one of his followers. Perhaps the Hindu mind eminently requires being guided by detailed rules and injunctions in every important duty, but this method of government was altogether new to the traditions and history of the Brahmo Somaj, and during Keshub's administration its success was exceedingly doubtful. Also the essential privilege of individual inspiration, which he had claimed on behalf of every member of his Church, was fatal to the interests of any personal control. Whenever any rule or discipline was found unpleasant, or irksome, the plea of inspiration was raised to set it aside. Evidently it was either too early or too late to introduce this principle of authority into the details of life, and Keshub at times became exceedingly despondent and indignant. All doubt in regard to himself, all doubt in regard to the laws he gave, was regarded by him as gross infidelity. He wrote thus to one of his friends:—"What have you been thinking? When I reflect on your present condition I am exceedingly pained and alarmed. What I have seen in Calcutta is a dreadful state of affairs, I can never be quiet when I think of it, or remember it. If so much unbelief has entered into our community, what will be the end? O! God, what will be the end? This thing built by my hands, this thing of my heart, this little body of men, will it be broken to pieces? Will the friends and brethren of my soul desert me, and each of them run away? May God do what is best! If you judge *me* to be selfish, covetous, worldly, undevout, that will do me no harm, but my heart is sore to think what will become of those who pass such judgments. For the sake of love I have borne many abuses, and I am destined to bear many more. Have those who are most intimate spared me? Look at Bejoy.* What has become of him! If to disbelieve in me is to reject the Dispensation of God, it troubles me to think what will become of men. If by disowning me, and overpassing me any one can be saved, I have nothing to object to that, but is that possible? I fear infidelity very much. It is more dreadful than the most dreadful sins. Govern each other firmly, have faith, and the kingdom of heaven will come nearer." The result of all this mutual disagreement was a threefold mischief. The missionaries, in spite of their high character, became every day more and more uncontrollable; the doctrine of inspiration threatened to produce unheard of

*Bejoy Krishna Goshwami left Keshub to join the *Sadharan Somaj* after the Cooch Behar marriage.

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monstrosities of conduct; and the practical work under the Brahmo Somaj every day declined, and was at last very nearly paralysed. The further Keshub felt his alienation from Brahmos in general, the more compact he tried to make the small apostolic body immediately around him, and consequently the greater was his dread to discover its elements more and more irreconcilable. What unspeakable pain and despondency this caused during his last days we do not wish to pourtray. But the unfortunate subject must repeatedly come up before the narrative of his life is quite finished. In the short history of the New Dispensation during Keshub's lifetime, this was its most serious blot, and after his departure, this has arrested its advancement. The government of the church is a problem which Keshub never solved, and it is farther from solution now than before.

No description of the character of Keshub Chunder Sen will be complete without some allusion to the really wonderful power he had of forming friendly attachments to every description of people. The strangest thing is that he was repeatedly accused of coldness and hard-heartedness! We have already spoken of the magnetism in him which from early age drew kindred elements, and always formed a circle with himself as its centre. The Brahmo missionaries, the "apostolic brotherhood" of the New Dispensation was that chosen circle. What we now want to say is, that he found kindred elements in every community, race, and caste. It is true harsh things were often said against him, and at times he was exceedingly unpopular. There was an undercurrent of jealousy always at work to damage his influence in the country. But it is equally true that Hindus, Mahomedans, and Europeans had a strange liking for him, and deeply felt that he loved them. His friends, his kinsmen, his acquaintances, though they at times could not account for his attitude towards them, and were inclined to complain, nevertheless found in him, every time they approached him, a fascination they could not shake off. Complete outsiders, leading Hindu and Mahomedan gentlemen, discovered in him a fondness and attachment for them, which produced not only a surprise, but a warm response. Hindus like Maharajah Kamal Krishna Dev, or Maharajah Sir Jotendra Mohan Tagore found him, and regarded him as a genuine friend. Mahomedans like Nawab Abdul Lateef admired him almost as a faithful Mahomedan, and Roman Catholic as well as Evangelical Christians put off their sectarian prejudices to honour his

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spiritual as well as practical catholicism. His religious eclecticism not only took the practical form of personal love to men of all persuasions, but what is more, secured their personal love also. Hence at his death they all mourned alike, they missed him alike, and bore the same testimony to his worth. But among men who immediately surrounded Keshub, his loving nature produced its deepest effects. Reserved and taciturn as he often was, the very rareness of the manifestation of his feelings had a flavour which frequency would have undoubtedly marred. When his expressed sympathy came, it came like a heavenly visitation, which none who received it dared to undervalue. How often did it happen that the missionaries, after the ruthless controversies they had with each other, came to him tired, bleeding at heart, hungering for consolation, and he by a word, or a look, or a smile, or a sweet beautiful prayer at the domestic sanctuary, ministered unto wounds and sorrows which nothing else could cure. Never courting affection, sympathy or aid on his own account, yet agonised at times by the treatment he received at home and abroad, when he at rare intervals poured forth his sufferings in those marvellous devotions of his before the throne of God, how all who heard him, even his opponents, were converted in a moment, and counted it an honor to be of any service to him. The servants adored him, and looked upon him as a demigod, they never heard an angry or cruel word from him. He conquered them more by his gentleness, than others do by violence. The children, flocks of whom from the neighbourhood gathered at Lily Cottage, were delighted at the least notice from him. At anniversary festivals he transported them by his exquisite humour, pleasant anecdotes, original inventions of demons to be burned and battered, fireworks to be let off, and no end of oranges and sweetmeats. But it was the women who wanted to have the most frequent access to him. Scrupulously careful about too freely mixing with the other sex, he often contrived to meet them half way through his wife, but they broke all barriers, and made personal appeals to him. These were mostly the wives and relatives of Brahmo missionaries. Their domestic wants were many; the resources of the Mission Office were scanty; the differences and the disorders of *Mangal Para* (the missionary neighbourhood) were chronic; and the ladies would trust no one with their complaints but the Minister himself. Between Lily Cottage and the missionary abodes, there was private communication through a trap door, which only at

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stated hours of the day was opened. But whenever it was unbarred, the women of the neighbourhood poured in, their babies in their arms, their children of various ages and dimensions following them. If it was prayer time, they found their way to the prayer-hall; if it was meal time, or any other time when Keshub could be caught, they beseiged him, and plied him with their demands, difficulties, and petitions, to all of which he listened with the utmost complaisance. They called him *Karta* (Doer) or Master. The English word Governor is the nearest approach to it. As soon as the *Karta* had listened to their troubles, they imagined relief could not be far off. The complaints and appeals, which were often of the most conflicting and personal description, were dealt with by him in a most delicate and sympathetic manner. Though he could not always administer the relief sought, he fully persuaded all the applicants, that they had his profound sympathy and affection. He had a special love for each individual, adapted both to the nature and circumstances of the party, and whether it was a man or a woman, they could not but feel that his friendship for them was singular, unlike his friendship for any other person. In his absence all this sympathetic friendship is blotted out. The criticisms are there, perhaps sharper than before; the rules for control and repression are there, the difficulties and sorrows are there, much worse than before—every one of the missionaries is an irresponsible master now in his own sphere;—but the gathering, binding, sweetening, warming force of Keshub's love is hidden for ever, and has left a strange blank on the face of everything!

Keshub had a singular sagacity in making out the motives and secrets of men. The lawyers found he was as good a lawyer as themselves, if not better; men of the world sought his advice on worldly affairs; and every one who entered into a quarrel with him, thought twice before he did so. He had fought and defeated many astute men with their own weapons. He says in the eighth chapter of *Jeevan Veda*. "By God's grace in the very dawn of my life I understood men to be very unsubstantial." He was exceedingly suspicious in forming his estimate of men. The present writer well remembers having heard him say more than once, "I hold men's motives to be unworthy, until they have proved them to be otherwise." He had a faith in the origin and constitution of human nature in the abstract, but he had a deep distrust of men in detail. He was keenly observant of good qualities, and when he was convinced of a man's honesty and

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worth, trusted him ever afterwards. But he was equally observant of bad qualities, and his observations generally confirmed his instinctive estimates. He saw the good and bad in all men, he forecast their individual conduct in probable emergencies, and his confidence even in his most intimate friends, therefore, was not entire. This may somewhat account for the reserve and reticence which had become habitual to him. The great capacity for affection he possessed, and his natural discrimination of virtue, balanced in his own mind these unfavourable estimates. But a man cannot be always and absolutely silent about everybody and everything. Hence his private opinions about his friends and associates percolated amongst those concerned, creating a great deal of mutual suspicion and disesteem. The good qualities he now and then pointed out had not much influence, because his disciples did not possess the balance of compensating love so natural with him, but the bad qualities (which latterly he rather frequently discussed) were productive of virulent criticism and mutual depreciation among the Brahmo missionaries. Even amidst his apparent success this threatened his cause with impending ruin. The curious thing about the whole matter was that the individual who poured his critical confidences into his ears imagined he had the monopoly of the leader's approbation, and the persons traduced were lowered for ever. But Keshub privately knew the depth and draught of water in each of his confidants, and calmly kept his own counsel. He hoped this rigorous mutual criticism would cure the evils against which it was directed, and in this hope he did not discourage the critics. But he could not help feeling constant misgivings of an utter disruption of his apostolical body through personal ill-feeling and rancour, especially when he was conscious that not a little of it was directed against himself. He knew there were serious defects in his apostolical colleagues; his natural gentleness, and his principle of personal non-interference made it impossible for him to cure these defects in the way other leaders would have done; so he left the delinquents to execute judgment on each other, giving only such general guidance through prayer, suggestion, and remote direction as he could. This policy, however, instead of serving the desired end, kindled a fiercer flame of ill-feeling which he tried in vain to quench. The occasional strong criticisms he himself made, in the absence, unfortunately, of the persons criticised, served as authority and argument for the internal warfare of his missionaries. His method of

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criticism had a threefold disadvantage. It was construed into unintended confidence by the persons who heard it, it never expressed his whole mind about the subject of the criticism, and it never expressed his estimate of those who made such wrong use of his unfavourable comments. He prescribed various humiliating methods to teach forgiveness and mutual good feeling, these perhaps produced some temporary effect, but never could repair the mischief.

When Keshub's estimates of his friends and associates were so sternly just, how could they be more indulgent towards his opponents? His opponents may be divided in two great classes, those in the Brahmo Somaj, and those outside. Amongst the latter, a large number of Christian missionaries were most formidable; there were a few, though very few, orthodox Hindus also; but the largest class of his opponents came from the educated infidels who hated every form of moral and religious earnestness. He frequently admonished the Christian missionaries to be more charitable and thoughtful in their judgments, taking a generous and high tone on the subject. He was sure of being able to convert his Hindu opponents as his movement grew. To clever, polished, irreverent infidels he was indifferent, or mildly scornful, now and then somewhat indignant, because he judged them to be the worst enemies of the land and the people. But the criticisms, which these different classes made, whatever might be their intrinsic value, he made it a point to reproduce in his newspaper organs, never hesitating to give full publicity to the most venomous calumnies. He treated these remote opponents with fair respect, though he was convinced their opposition was mistaken. But to his adversaries in the Brahmo Somaj, by far the most embittered of any he had to deal with, his attitude was very different. He was personally acquainted with each one of them, and brought his fierce knowledge of human nature to bear upon their motives and conduct. He, very seldom, expressed any positive anger; but his intense consciousness that in attacking him, they were working at the downfall of the purposes of Providence, produced a secret repulsion and wrath almost unbounded. Perhaps the only exception he made in this respect was in favour of Devendra Nath Tagore, for whom his love and respect remained unimpaired till the last. He went to work to counteract the plans of his adversaries with a silent persistency which never flagged and never failed. All the intense hatred he felt against falsehood and against iniquity

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inspired his efforts. He had no toleration of any kind for the motives of such opponents, and the sentiments and courses of action he adopted against them were not calculated to disarm their opposition. In the first place, by his great sagacity he anticipated and outwitted them in their own game. In the next place, he exposed now and then their actual (not imaginary) sins with a vividness and realism most galling, most fatal. He never descended into personalities; he dealt in general statements, but the generalities were so specialised and unmistakable that the shafts went straight home, and rankled in the hearts they were meant for. In the third place, he took an attitude of silent scorn and studious contempt even more offensive than the scathing language of the direct condemnation. He never named any one if he could help it; even indirectly he alluded to any person as seldom as possible; he never read the newspapers of his Brahmo adversaries; never noticed, far less answered their criticisms. He ignored them at once and altogether. Another means he generally took was to suggest to his enthusiastic followers, always more impetuous and demonstrative than himself, to take particular lines of attack, which they did with a heartiness of zeal most direct and aggressive. And then in the last place he had constitutionally a reckless and almost ferocious defiance of the opinions of his adversaries, which led him deliberately to persevere in courses of conduct they most condemned. The more they criticised and vilified, the more obstrusively he did the things which angered them, till the very persistency silenced further comment. Let us now proceed to give some instances of these different kinds of tactics. When towards the end of 1865, the authorities of the *Adi Brahmo Somaj* at Jorasanko wanted to turn out Keshub and his companions on various charges, a sharp conflict arose as to whom the Indian Mirror belonged, then a fortnightly newspaper, representing the views of the Somaj. Babu Devendra Nath and his party claimed it as their possession, on account of the money-contributions made by him, and Keshub claimed that morally it was his, by reason of his active share in starting the paper, and of the editorial responsibilities which for some years he had taken entirely upon himself. The paper was printed at the *Somaj* Press, and Babu Devendra Nath refused to allow Keshub to have any access to the printing establishment, or to the literary work of the newspaper, making it over in the meanwhile to another young man. His party thought they had sufficiently snubbed Keshub. The paper

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was a fortnightly, and they were sure they could get out the next number at their leisure. But what was their astonishment to find that before a week was over, Keshub had already got an extraordinary number of the Indian Mirror published by an independent press, with a scathing article on the high-handedness which had attempted to shut him out! The *Adi Somaj* people gave up the conflict in despair, but never forgave Keshub for their defeat. After the Cooch Behar marriage, the seceders got up a stormy meeting, and then conceived the bold design of taking forcible possession of the Church premises to manage them according to their own ideas. All arrangements to this effect were made, and they were sure of being able to execute their plan in triumph. But they had counted without their host, Keshub got every information of their designs, and when the storming party approached the *Mandir* building the next morning, they found it in the possession of a strong detachment of Keshub's followers, who soon called the police to their help, and dispersed their adversaries. Some of the language he had used against the leading members of the *Sadharan Somaj* stuck in their throats like fish-bones, and it is to be apprehended they have not got over the irritation even now. Not in anger, but in cold deliberation, he called them "secularists," "infidels," "sensualist," "prayerless," "vicious," "worldly chaff whom the winnowing fan of the Cooch Behar marriage blew away." He had little patience with men who were tolerant to them. He had no faith in the mission of the *Sadharan Somaj*, except as a destructive agency, or in the future of that body. During one of the anniversaries, however, when a numerous procession followed him, he caused the whole assembly to stop in front of the *Sadharan Somaj* building, while he prostrated himself on the ground, in honour, we suppose, of the God Whom his adversaries worshipped there. The latter took the act in anything but a complimentary sense, and made a fresh grievance of it. On one occasion he advised some of his disciples to go and invade the house of a principal *Sadharan Somaj* opponent who had ridiculed in a public lecture some of the principles of the New Dispensation. He described the incident thus:—

"Our brethren were much concerned to hear that one of the deluded renegades of the Church had set himself up as a reviler of the New Dispensation, and had the audacity to give public addresses before young men, caricaturing the true believers and even their God. Such a man must not go unpunished, for his wanton blas-

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phemy and irreverent scoffings might, if unchecked, do some mischief among the unguarded. For the protection of the weak, as well as the restoration of the unfortunate brother, who really knows not what he is doing, some attempt seems to be needed to put down the propagation of such anti-dispensation drollery. For two or three days he was made the subject of earnest prayer in the Sanctuary, and at last moved by the Spirit of God, a company of enthusiastic devotees went to the house of the misguided brother and sang the Divine name with great force, like so many poor mendicants invoking God's blessing upon him, and avenging his infidel attacks with prayer and hymn. The same thing was done the next day, and was again repeated. We do not know what effect this has produced upon our weak-minded brother. But we trust it will do its work in time under the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit. This new mode of chastising apostacy with love, persecution with prayer, and scoffing with solemn hymns, cannot but be productive of the most salutary results, and will no doubt magnify the New Dispensation."

It is not easy to determine how much love, forgiveness, or solemnity there might be in these retributive visitations, but surely they were "not productive of the most salutary results," nor of much "sanctifying grace," because the persons so visited, took the ministrations to be insults added to injury, and were all the more hardened by them, becoming more vituperative afterwards than they had ever been before. Keshub, however, fully believed he was only doing his duty to them. In every quarrel he had with anybody, he absolutely believed God was on his side, his enemies were absolutely wrong. It is not our purpose to give reasons for this belief, we have only to state things as we found them. Nor is it our purpose to describe the attempts which his enemies made to ruin his private and public character, men who were not only his friends at one time, but his devoted disciples. The newspapers of the time must be read to gauge the intensity of ill-feeling. But the work of a faithful recorder could not be conscientiously discharged if we did not give the reader some idea of how Keshub felt and acted under the trials and provocations heaped upon him. He was sincerely convinced that the men who were against him, were against Providence, against the laws of truth and righteousness, and he denounced them accordingly. He multiplied the proceedings which offended them most, he had their criticisms occasionally contradicted by the youngest and least important members of his community, he showed he had very little regard for their opposition. But if any one showed the least sign of contrition he was most ready to forgive. His quarrel was with their public procedures, and not their private personali-

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ties. He frequently prayed for them, set apart a day during the anniversary month to invoke blessings upon them. He spoke of them thus in the *New Dispensation* paper:—

"To all our enemies, in India and in England.
To all our enemies, Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Mahomedan, Parsi and sceptical,
To all our enemies among the rich and the poor, among the educated and the uneducated classes,
To all who are antagonists in faith and doctrine,
To all who are jealous of our prosperity,
To all who have slandered our character, publicly or privately, or have otherwise tried to injure our best interest,
To all who hate us and abhor us for some reason or other,
We send our fraternal love and good wishes. May you prosper in health and happiness, and may those who are near and dear to you prosper! May the Merciful Father vouchsafe unto you His blessing, and promote your temporal and spiritual welfare! Permit us to sit at your feet, and learn humility and forgiveness."

One singular article of the short creed of the New Dispensation as laid down by the Minister was "Loyalty to Sovereign." This political declaration was foreign to every phase of antecedent Brahmoism, and took aback many people. But by some inner processes Keshub had felt convinced for a long time that loyalty to Govrnment must be an essential principle of the new religion. He enjoyed this principle as the doctrine of God in History taught by him all along from 1866. He said in his lecture on "Behold the Light of Heaven in India" in 1875, that "ever since the introduction of the British power into India, there has been going on a constant up-heavel and development of the native mind under an over-ruling Providence." Then in a later lecture, after the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi in 1877, he spoke thus:—

"Do you believe that there is God in history? Do you not recognise the finger of special Providence in the progress of nations? Assuredly, the record of British rule in India is not a chapter of profane history, but of ecclesiastical history. The book which treats of the moral, social and religious advancement of our great country with the help of Western science, under the paternal rule of the British nation, is indeed a sacred book. There we see clearly if is Providence that rules India through England. . .

Educated countrymen, you are bound to be loyal to your Divinely-appointed sovereign. Not to be loyal argues base ingratitude and absence of faith in Providence. You are bound to be loyal to the British Government, that came to your rescue, as God's ambassador, when your country was sunk in ignorance and superstition and hopeless jejuneness, and had since lifted you to your present high position. As His chosen instruments, then honour your sovereign and the entire ruling body with fervent loyalty. The more loyal we

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are, the more we shall advance with the aid of our rulers in the path of moral, social, and political reformation. Here they have met together, under an overruling Providence, to serve most important purposes in the Divine economy. The mutual intercourse of England and India, political as well as social, is destined to promote the true interests and lasting glory of both nations. We are rejoiced to see the *Rajahs* and *Maharajahs* of India offering their united homage to Empress Victoria and her representative at the Imperial assemblage. For greater will be our rejoicing when all the chiefs and people of India shall be united with the English nation in a vast International Assemblage, before the throne of the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords."

This conviction in the course of popular teaching came out in the shape of an Apostolical Proclamation in the end of 1879, which made Keshub's friends both in England and India very angry. In that document, the Supreme Being as Mother of India is represented as saying, "I have chosen India to show unto all nations the working of My special Providence in accomplishing national redemption. The British Government is My Government, the Brahmo Somaj is My Church. My daughter Queen Victoria, have I ordained and set over the country to rule its people, to give them education, material comfort and protect their health and property. Be loyal to her, for the warrant of her name bears My signature. Love her, and honour her as My servant and representative, and give her your loyal support, and co-operation, so that she may carry out My purposes unhindered, and give India political and material prosperity." All this belief and sentiments he formulated into the principles of "Loyalty to Sovereign" in his simple creed of the New Dispensation.

India, during the greater part of Keshub's public career, was the hot-bed of political agitation which intensified towards his closing years. It was the educated classes mainly that created and kept up this agitation. A great number of Brahmos mixed freely in it. The character of this excitement need scarcely be specified. It is the spontaneous sense of nationality, awakened by education, struggling against the dominance of a ruling power, whose interests, apparently at least, conflict with the interest of the people. Of course the latter are weak. What is their united strength, even if they can unite, against the resources and power of the British empire? The sense of this weakness, added perhaps to the contemptuous indifference of a great many officials to all agitation about the people's rights, and the reckless race hatred of individual Englishmen and Hindus, make the political dis-

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cussions of the day needlessly rancorous. The virulent newspaper-writing on both sides, the mutual misrepresentations, the abnormal brooding over occasional instances of personal wrong, make peace and good-will all but impossible. On the other hand again, the sycophancy and subservience of place-hunters, the timidity, vascillation, and yielding incompetence of not a few among the oppositionists themselves, disgust both communities alike, and darken every prospect of reconciliation. The more hot-headed amongst the rulers recommend unmitigated coercion, want to gag the press, have disarmed the nation, and wish to ride rough-shod over every manner of adverse criticism. The wiser amongst them do not mix in the personal heat of the controversy, counsel moderation, timely concessions, patience, and peace. Little good, however, seems to come from all this, so far as the mitigation of the ill-feeling is concerned. Keshub took no part in the rage of this controversy. Not that his sensibilities lacked in patriotic ardour, or in the perception of wrong. He was as ready as anybody else to protest against official injustice, but his loyalty to the British Government never wavered for a single day. He very profoundly felt that the benefits of education, the refinements and aspirations of a reawakened society, nay, the very feelings of political independence which found such angry vent, and above all the religion of the Brahmo Somaj, were all the products of the advent of the British power in India. Individual Englishmen might be chargeable with a hundred sins of omission and commission, but there was undoubted Providence behind the British rule. The seditious tendencies of the age, the evil of unprincipled journalism, of noisy, theatrical patriotism, he truly deplored. He did not want to discourage public spirit, but he strongly set his face against treasonable demonstrations of every kind. He knew that in the course of time, the Brahmo Somaj will be a very extensive and powerful organisation, welding Indian nationalities into a homogeneous brotherhood, but he also knew that in India religious enthusiasm has been the source of every manner of political disturbance. And he faithfully and strenuously endeavoured to foster the feelings of steady loyalty in his Church. "Had he exercised his marvellous eloquence," a high official said to the present writer soon after Keshub's death, "to excite the thousands, who hung upon his words in every city, to political discontent, and seditious agitation, what disaster might not have been the consequence? But far from that, all he said, all

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he did, was in favour of law, order, and loyalty. No, he never forsook the interests of the British Government, and we, Englishmen, shall never forget him!" Many impartial Englishmen in this country as well as in England will bear a similar testimony. But his loyalty was not only a public principle, it was a private personal sentiment. Always faithful, grateful, wise, and affectionate, his English visit deeply affected his attitude both to the British Government and the British people. He felt that in religious and moral union between England and India lay the prosperity of both countries, and indirectly the prosperity of the whole world. The gracious reception which he met from Her Majesty the Queen-Empress only heightened such impressions. It had the effect of the profoundest religious impulse upon him. His loyalty to the Empress was a feeling of deep affection, both for the royal person, and the royal family. This feeling he tried to propagate as widely as possible. He permeated his immediate disciples with it, he educated his wife and family into it, he made it an article of faith in his Church. He lost no opportunity to impress it upon the community. He speaks of his politics in the following manner in the very first number of the *New Dispensation newspaper*. "We do not care to dabble in politics. It is beyond our province. But so far as there is religion in politics, we are bound to uphold and vindicate it. The earthly sovereign is God's representative, and must therefore have our allegiance and homage. We look upon Victoria as our Queen-Mother, and we are politically her children. She sits upon the throne as India's mother, guardian, and friend, protecting the lives and property of her million children, redressing their just grievances, promoting their material and moral prosperity, and helping them to attain political and social manhood. She represents law, order, justice, and is appointed by Providence to rule over us as a mother is appointed to look after her children. Therefore we love her, and honour her, and consider loyalty to be as sacred as filial obedience. A man, who hates his sovereign, is morally as culpable as he who abhors or maltreats his father or mother. Sedition is rebellion against the authority of God's representative, and therefore against God. It is not merely a political offence, but sin against Providence. Disloyalty and infidelity are convertible terms, so thoroughly is the British Government identified with the saving economy of Providence. The Church of the New Dispensation, historically the result of England's rule in the East, religiously the effect of Western

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thought upon the Indian mind, is profoundly thankful to Empress Victoria, more so than any other Church, or section of the community. So long as we believe in the New Gospel, we shall eschew disloyalty as a moral evil, involving a treasonable ingratitude, and a denial of God in history. The British Government may be weak, and even vicious, yet it shall command our respect and allegiance so far as it is a divine force. This is our *principle* of loyalty, we cherish also the warmest *feelings* of loyalty towards the person of our sovereign. We love our Queen as our mother."

But though Keshub was so intensely loyal at heart, yet he never sought any reward or recognition for it. For years after his public career had commenced, he was not even asked at Government House. It was by a mere accident he got into the Viceroy's list. At State festivities he studiously kept behind the assembled guests, never venturing forward, and appreciative Viceroys had to send their aides-de-camp to make a regular pursuit of him, and unearth him out of his corner in the promiscuous crowd. When the Government of Sir Richard Temple, in 1876, offered to make him a Municipal Commissioner and a Justice of the Peace, he thankfully declined the honor, and when in the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi in 1877, they promised to decorate him with a medal, his modesty made it impossible for him to accept the distinction. This genuine loyalty that he felt for his sovereign regulated his whole conduct towards the Princes and *Rajas* of his own country, in short towards all persons having authority. His relations to some of the Indian Chiefs were most cordial, and principal amongst these was His Highness Tukaji Holkar, the late ruler of Indore. Keshub visited Indore in 1874, and an intimate friendship sprang up between the *Maharaja* and the Brahmo leader, which the former did his best to maintain to the end. Keshub's advice was sought in almost every important affair which concerned the Chief's interests, and the latter's confidence in him was unbounded. He presented dresses of honor or *khillats* to his friend, valued at large sums of money; and when the Albert Hall was established, his help was sought and the *Maharaja* made a donation of Rs. 8,000, the largest amount, we believe, which any individual contributed to that undertaking. The fact is he paid on this occasion proportionately to his esteem for the founder of the Albert Hall. Krishna Behari Sen, Keshub's brother, thus describes their relation:—

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"Holkar came to Calcutta to pay his respects to the Prince of Wales in 1875. The Maharaja left himself entirely in the hands of his friend (Keshub) the place where he was to reside, the supply of stores and food for his household and retinue, the smallest details—were all left to be settled by him. The friends of the Minister were surprised to find him so well able to go through the complicated details of a royal reception. A large sum of money was left to him to be dealt out in public charities, and among his gifts was the magnificent donation of Rs. 8,000 for the Albert Hall, and other sums for the benefit of the educational institutions of the city. Holkar invited the ladies of Mr. Sen's family and introduced them to the *Maharanis*. The Minister's mother was highly honoured when the Maharaja turned to her and said—'Are you not my mother also?' From Calcutta, His Highness went to Burdwan. His friend went to the Howrah station to bid him farewell. As the train was about to start, and words of farewell were about to be exchanged, the Maharaja caught the hands of the Minister, and took him into his own carriage, and then the train left the station. At Burdwan, the Maharaja Burdwan came to receive the party. The two Maharajas have occupied the same carriage and every one was about to start when Holkar stopped and cried for Babu Keshub Chunder Sen. The latter came to the front, and was driven along with him to the palace, where separate arrangements were made for his comfort and reception. Of course, he was not Burdwan's, but Indore's guest. The day after their arrival the guests were out promenading by the side of the tank, when Holkar asked for a boat. It was brought on the shoulders of many men, and His Highness stepped into it. The cry arose—Babu Keshub Chunder Sen! Babu Keshub Chunder entered the boat also. So the two rowed together. The boat rounded the coast once or twice, the Maharaja of Burdwan and the whole court walking and keeping pace with the vessel all the while. Gradually the boatmen carried the passengers to the centre of the tank, and there for more than half an hour they remained engaged in conversation on important political subjects. The sight was interesting, and to the host and his friends, a little inexplicable too, Burdwan wondering what on earth could draw these two souls together!".....

"The next time that they had dealings with each other was when the Cooch Behar marriage took place. As soon as Holkar heard of it, he sent an agent to Calcutta with a rich *khillat* and cordial letter of congratulation. The last occasion of their meeting was the Delhi assemblage. Babu Keshub Chunder Sen was not invited by Government, but he went there as the guest of Holkar. In those days, our Minister had commenced his ascetic practice of cooking, and in Indore's tent he cooked for himself and carried on his usual devotional services. Holkar, one day, began to banter him for this practice. 'Why this folly, Babu Saheb, while you may have everything done by others?' 'To promote poorness of spirit,' was the reply. His Highness heard it, and kept quiet."

Keshub's relations with the *Maharaja of Jaipur* were also cordial, as *Jaipur* was the Native State where a great many of his near relatives were settled, and employed by the *Maharaja* in responsible posts. The British Government knew of the confidence reposed in the Brahmo reformer by the Native Princes, and though it watched their movements with

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jealousy, it never discouraged such friendship, but on the contrary thought it beneficial.

In the early years of Keshub's life, his ardent love of dramatic performances has been described. It was a beautiful characteristic in him that he never lost, as he grew great, his youthful love for any innocent recreation. On the contrary, this early appetite for amusement became, as everything else became in him, chastened, exalted, and assimilated to his desire of serving the public. He had a great fondness for the popular musical entertainments known as *Jatras*. It was to be expected that with mature years, and many severe trials in life, he should outgrow this boyish taste. Far from it, when the ascetic developments of the New Dispensation were in full swing, he would incur considerable trouble and expense to arrange for a first class *Jatra*, in order that his congregation and missionaries might have an interval of amusement to vary the uniform routine of their intensely spiritual pursuits. He had a boyish fondness for making purchases of objects that struck his fancy, but his pecuniary resources being very limited, the fulfilment of this desire sometimes became rather an eccentric and inconvenient amusement. Somehow it grew to be a fact of his nature that the objects he wanted to possess had an influence upon the direction of his spiritual culture. For instance, his most characteristic and oft-repeated principle was Christ's teaching of taking no thought for the morrow. This precept, as every one knows, was illustrated by the example of "the fowls of the air." And Keshub would sometimes go to the *bazar*, and bring home large cages of all sorts of little birds, feeding and nursing them with the most assiduous care, till the poor things all died one after another in the course of a few weeks! His garden had a pond which was the scene of some of his ceremonies, and which he called *Kamal Saravar*, or "the lake of lilies." He wanted to float a little boat in this lake, to remind him perhaps of the voyage of life. But a picturesque boat was a costly affair, and it so happened his exchequer was so insufficient at the time that a benevolently disposed friend, a well known police-officer, had volunteered to manage his household for him. Keshub secretly meditated what he should do under the circumstance, and one fine afternoon absented himself from home for a long time. When he returned he came with the longed-for boat on men's shoulders, who immediately launched it on "the lake of lilies." Keshub was full of admiration, and the

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made more than one voyage across the pond, but the friendly police-officer was so put out by this childish extravagance that he resigned his charge of managing Keshub's affairs! We shall give another, instance of this boyish simplicity. One unfailing companion he always had in his devotions, and that was his "Sweet *Ektara.*" This is a primitive musical instrument of one string, which wandering Hindu devotees carry with them. It does not require any skill or culture to play upon the *Ektara,* and that was specially why Keshub preferred it. It is a standing protest against the elaborate and unspiritual art of modern music. He went on striking at the wire with his forefinger while he ejaculated his prayers with the rudest and most devoted simplicity. In religious services he secretly detested scientific music and musical instruments. Our friend Troylokya, the Singing Apostle, whose musical tastes were more complicated, had procured a *Tambura** from somewhere, which he used to keep in Keshub's bedroom, on the top of an *almira.* One night, some time after he had gone to bed, he quietly got up, fetched down the *Tambura* from its lofty perch, and began deliberately to pull out the wires, and crush the woodwork to pieces. His wife woke up alarmed at the noise, and asked what he was about. He coolly replied, "he was smashing Troylokya's *Tambura,* he had tolerated it long enough, he was now bent upon destroying it." From that day Brother Troylokya gave up the use of the *Tambura* in the daily apostolic services, and the *Ektara* reigned without a rival. Strange as all this may seem, side by side with the asceticism, sacraments, and high spiritualities of the New Dispensation, it found a combination in Keshub's complex mind, and as the apostolic fervour increased, his early predilections increased also, and found a systematice embodiment. His great idea now became to found a New Dispensation Drama. In August 1881, he wrote as follows in his newspaper:—

"The drama exercises an influence upon society hardly inferior to that which the Press has been acknowledged to exert upon the destinies of nations. But as every good thing in this world is liable to abuse, and has proved a prolific source of mischief, the drama is no exception. In this country, the history of the drama during the last twenty years has not been altogether such as to cause rejoicing and congratulation. National morals have suffered grievously and

*A more scientific and complicated musical instrument for tuning than *Ektara.*

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many there are who hesitate to send their sons to native theatricals, lest they should come back with their tastes corrupted and their baser proclivities inflamed. Are we then to reject the drama? Is it not possible to bring serious subjects on the stage? May we not teach the profligate to repent, help the worldly-minded to become godly, arrest the growth of prevailing unbelief, and turn the nation's thoughts, tastes and sentiments towards God and truth through the drama? May we not thereby advance the cause of the New Dispensation? Yes, we may."

He accordingly set on foot the project of having a New Dispensation play as soon as possible. Brother Troylokya Nath's pen was always ready, and he began to compose the *Nava Brindaban Natak* in right earnest. The plot was somewhat to this effect. A highly educated young man, law-graduate of the University, took to the usual course of intemperance and sin. And so far did he go in the course of vice and professional dishonesty that he was at last seized by the police, tried for his offences, and transported to the *Andaman* Islands. In his place of exile, he reflected on his past sins, became truly repentant, and was converted to a highly moral and religious life. In the meantime, his miserable wife, who by the additional loss of her child, for a time lost her reason, was also drawn strongly to a religious life. Her husband, however, by his good conduct acquired the favour of his keepers, and at last obtained a pardon. He returned home a very humble devout man, and instead of settling down to domestic life, took his wife with him, and wandered about the country in search of holy men and spiritual guides. In the course of time, he found access to some saintly souls on the way, whose company, example, and teaching did him the greatest service. Such communion led to further travels, and they at last arrived at *Nava Brindaban*, a Hindu form of the New Jerusalem, where the representatives of all nations, and the devotees of different religions glorified God the Father in a universal brotherhood. The story, of which we only give the barest skeleton, was embellished and improved by constant suggestions from Keshub. Most of the Brahmo missionaries, as well as laymen enthusiastically enlisted themselves as actors of the new play, which produced very strong and wholesome effects on the public mind.

In the beginning of 1882, during the anniversary festival, Keshub's fatal malady was first discovered. His constitution was exceedingly nervous, and within a few days he began to get fits of faintness which greatly alarmed his friends.

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The lecture on "That Marvellous Mystery, the Trinity," one of his master-pieces was, however, safely delivered. Medical treatment promptly began, and he was put upon a diet which no doubt enfeebled him. Much of his active work had to be shared by his colleagues, and as much rest given him as possible. But the idea of the New Dispensation Theatre, which had worked in his mind during the latter part of the last year, had to be carried out, and he set about it as actively as it was his nature to do. The plot and the effect of the *Nava Brindaban* drama were continually improved. His genius in stage management and scenic taste, cultivated in youth, were matured by experience and occasional attendance at the metropolitan English theatres. And relieved from much of his ordinary work, he applied himself wholly to make the theatre a success. During the hot months May and June he became worse, and was therefore sent on a change to Darjeeling. He went there after performing the *Namkaran* (name-giving) ceremony of his tenth child. The climate of the Himalayas did him no good, and perhaps some harm, though the coolness of the air was a relief after the burning heat of the plains. He returned to Calcutta soon, and the New Dispensation drama was put upon the stage in the middle of September. A few months before this, Keshub introduced the practice of what he called "the New Dance."* In India dancing and singing in the excitement of religious emotion has been the custom of all sects from time immemorial. Every form of popular faith had always possessed this custom. In the Brahmo Somaj the practice had gradually introduced itself since the devotional development in 1866, and gained force and permanency. At first Keshub himself in his natural shyness, kept aloof from the dancing, but as he more and more largely partook of the popular excitement, he threw off this reserve, and enthusiastically joined it. He had never done so more heartily than during the anniversary of 1882, when, in the first stage of his illness, the exhaustion of the exercise brought on a serious fit of fainting. But far from giving it up on that account, he organised it into a regular institution of his Church during the succeeding August festival. It was done on an elaborate method, and Keshub describes it thus:—

"The New Dance on the occasion of our late holy festival was a success. If it failed at all, it was because of too much success.

*"নব নৃত্য"

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The number of dancers doubled and trebled in no time, and exceeded all calculations, and the enthusiasm was so great that the limited space in front of the *Vedi* where the dance took place soon became hot as a furnace. Yet the shout and the gallop, and the joyous whirl round and round went on, and it was quite a blessed sight to see so many boys and youths and men of maturer years all dancing around their invisible Mother in the centre. The three 'circles' wore *chaddars* of different colours, yellow, white and brown, and as they moved, one within another, with hands upraised, keeping time to the deep, sweet sound of the sacred *Mridanga*, the sight was both cheering and inspiring. The limited accommodation proved a source of inconvenience, and everybody felt that the New Dance required a much larger area where hundreds might join and dance merrily. There was the flag of the New Dispensation, and the usual accompaniment of native dance, the jingling *noopur* was not wanting on the occasion, Bhai Kunja Bihari led the dance."

It is not at all difficult to imagine what the feelings of the European reader would be at the introduction of this practice. And we remember not a few intelligent Hindu theists also disapproved of it. But it will have to be borne in mind that the religion of the New Dispensation was meant to be the religion of the people, of the poor, of the excitable impulsive masses who are inebriated with their devotional feelings. The same rule of ecclesiastical respectability cannot be applicable to all classes anywhere, much less in India. The religion of spontaneous instincts has in all ages been the religion of India. And Keshub's great aim was to give his country a national religion, which in its various practices would suit every kind of spiritual constitution. The Theatre, the Dance, and "the Jugglery of the New Dispensation" which followed the latter, were made the subjects of renewed criticism, and this time a part of the Christian community joined the common cry that all this would lead to "the demoralisation" of the Brahmo Somaj.

We have, as briefly as we could, alluded to almost all the ceremonies and celebrations of the New Dispensation. It is time now to ask how many of these practices Keshub meant to perpetuate. Was it his object to set them forth as essential and unavoidable requirements of his religion, or were they meant as mere illustrations of the spirit and teaching of the New Dispensation to suit the imaginative character of his countrymen? If they were nothing more than forms, tentative and transitory, much of the serious objection felt against them disappears. As in his own case, disciplines and forms were accepted for passing necessities, and fell into disuse as soon as the wants were satisfied, so in the case of his Church most of these vows and ceremonies were temporary

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disciplines. They were largely opposed, because men thought they were going to be adopted as permanent institutions. The outside criticism took a serious aspect, coming from the few English friends left after the crisis of the Cooch Behar marriage controversy, and also from some of our well-wishers in this country. This was earnestly pointed out to him, and he so far sympathised with the objections as to have the following important resolution passed at a conference of the Brahmo missionaries held, during the agitation, in his domestic sanctuary.

"The fundamental truths of *Brahmo Dharma*, in which we had faith before, we still continue to hold. Our faith in this respect has not been in the least shaken. But though these truths are certain and immutable, our characters and social lives are neither certain nor immovable. In the course of time, the religion of the Brahmo Somaj will find its way into the lives of Brahmos, and will be embodied in customs, usages, language, literature, social rules and institutions, as well as forms of worship, and devotional disciplines. How this will happen we do not know, it is known to God only. Led by His Spirit we are making progress in that direction. According to the wants we feel from time to time, according to the emergencies and dangers of our position, according to our inward condition, God sends unto us His dispensations. And we, too, instead of being sceptical and obstructive, in obedience to the vows of our service, follow these dispensations. So long as a particular dispensation remains in force we obey it, and realise its spirit. When the want is supplied, and the crisis is over, and our condition varies, a new discipline is adminnistered unto us which becomes the object of our obedience again. Therefore, our outward proceedings are subject to change. Those changes are temporary, conformable to circumstances, and ordained by Providence. From observing them, no one ought to conclude that there has been any change in us, so far as fundamental truths and sentiments are concerned. As the tree grows out of the seed, so does the Brahmo Somaj grow out of its seed truths. In regard to language, and forms, and externals, there has been change, and there shall be more change in future. But through the midst of it all, we shall with our families and friends, acquire greater love, holiness, and enthusiasm. Let our generous friends wait with hope and patience. Let them not be offended by agitation and change. And in the end, in the fulness of the time, they will understand the real organisation of the Brahmo Somaj, and the harmony of its parts."*

It is an unspeakable misfortune that Keshub Chunder Sen did not live to complete that harmony, and explain his meaning. But the meaning has been abundantly indicated by his subsequent utterances, very carefully made, on the

*This resolution appeared in the *Theistic Quarterly Review* for May, 1880.

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character of his religion. Says he in the *New Dispensation* paper :—

"The New Dispensation is thoroughly scientific. It hates whatsoever is unscientific. It has an abhorrence of delusions and myths. It is empirical, and relies upon observation and experience. It has no hypothesis, and it takes nothing on trust. It stands the severest logical tests, and is made up of demonstrable truths. It is supported by reasoning, inductive and deductive. It harmonies with the latest discoveries of science and keeps pace with the progress of philosophy and exact science. It touches not, and cautiously avoids, supernaturalism, and the whole domain of miracles and prophecies. Dreams, visions, trance, illumination, spirit-rapping, reveries, it discountenances. It has no faith in a visible or audible divinity, or in spirits that speak or are spoken to. It acknowledges no infallible human guide, no infallible book. It is prepared to reject every doctrine which science may oppose or new discoveries may explode. The New Dispensation loves history. It reveres history because it believes in Providence, and sees God in history. The New Dispensation is thoroughly practical. It is the religion of activity and energy. It is the worship of industry. It deprecates laziness and indolence as a sin against God. It is the service of man in varied fields of philanthropic usefulness. It is the religion of study, researches, criticism, thought and dialectic. It is never-ceasing in godly work. The lazy mendicant, the sleepy *Fakir*, the fanciful theorist, the speechless quietist, find no place in it. In the temple of work it adores the God of Force."

He balances these practical traits which he calls European traits, by setting forth the emotional, or Asiatic traits of the New Dispensation thus:—

"The New Dispensation is profoundly emotional. It hates dryness. It is the religion of tender love and sweet affection. Faith without love, work without love, it doth not countenance. It affords the fullest culture to all the highest emotions and impulses of the heart. Its wisdom is the loving knowledge of God, its work is the loving service of God. It possesses a heart overflowing with the milk of love and eyes glistening with tears of devotion. It makes all things sweet by its touch. The New Dispensation is eminently poetical. Its thoughts and sentiments are poetical, its language is the language of poetry. Plain, dull, isipid prose does not accord with its imaginative spirit. It represents the golden age of religion, when all looks bright and joyous, and heaven and earth shine in fascinating colours. It clothes truth in the soft, silken drapery of imagination. It deals largely in metaphors and allegories, in parables and rich imagery. The New Dispensation is transcendentally spiritual. Its eyes are naturally turned inward and they see vividly the spirit-world within. It prefers the soul-kingdom to the kindom of the senses. It abhors materialism. It always magnifies the spirit, and spiritualises everything it touches. It sees with the spirit-eye and hears with the spirit-ear. It drinks inspiration. It builds the eternal city, the kingdom of heaven within, and dwells therein all the spare hours of the day. The New Dispensation is the religion of poverty and asceticism. Its motto is "vanity of vanities, all is vanity." It loves

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and honours simplicity. In dress and diet it is always poor and abstemious. It shuns carnality and the riches and honours of the world as temptations, and prefers life in the hermitage. Humble and poor is the man of the New Dispensation."

The reader in comparing the two parts of the statement will be struck with the absence of any allusion to ceremonies and symbols. If these had been essential to his system, is there any doubt Keshub should have said so in such an elaborate exposition of the character of the New Dispensation? The fact is, he looked upon these rites as a passing phase of culture, useful in throwing light upon a certain order of religious experiences. Ceremonies and disciplines were to be *used*, but never adopted as permanent, or at all *essential*.

Nothing, however, is so conclusive on the point as the few words of reply (*New Dispensation*, September 30th, 1881) which were given to Professor Max Müller's objection to ritualism. "In anti-ritualistic Theism," says Keshub, "which is wholly spiritual and above the senses, was there any necessity for forms or rites? None whatever. And because there was no necessity, there was a deep necessity to prove there was no necessity . . . . Nothing can better explain an old, lifeless ceremony than a new, living, illustrative ceremony . . . . . .And who were they that performed these rites? All? No. Only a few. And how often were they performed? Only upon one single occasion. The needful explanation was given. And that was all." Undoubtedly then Keshub never meant the perpetuation of the rites and ceremonies of the New Dispensation. Why then did he perform them at all? The explanation of ceremony through ceremony we understand. But there was another purpose, or why should the ceremonies take place so often and so repeatedly? Religious practices as a vehicle of the religious spirit he undoubtedly upheld, ceremonies found a place in his catholic, spiritual economy. Only ceremonies were never meant to be essential, they had no abstract and absolute value of their own, they were never to cramp the spirit, nor bar the way to future and fresh developments. As natural embodiments of deep faith, they have their great use, but Keshub knew the danger of making any ceremony perpetual, or enforcing it as essential.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE LAST DAYS, 1883-1884.

THE disastrous year 1883 opened with Keshub's last lecture on "Asia's Message to Europe."* This lecture was conceived in the same spirit which caused the production of the New Year's Day Epistle published only a few weeks before. The object of both was to lay before mankind the perfectly unsectarian and universal character of the Church of the New Dispensation, "to send unto the world a message of peace and love, of harmony and reconciliation." He called upon "Asia, Europe, Africa, and America, with diverse instruments to praise the New Dispensation, and sing the Fatherhood of God, and Brotherhood of man." He proclaimed his Church "the Catholic Church of the Future." To Christ he assigns the position of the "Human Centre" of this Church, because, says he, Christ Jesus identifies himself not only with Divinity but with Humanity. "In blessed God-vision he saw his force was God-force, and he also saw himself in all nations, and he saw all the world summed up in himself." . . . "Behold the central figure of the Divine Son. The radii of all human races and nationalities from the remotest parts in the circumference of humanity converge and meet in him. He attracts all unto himself, and reconciles all in a common fellowship with himself and his God." Such was Keshub's final view of the Future Church, and the place of Jesus Christ in it. The lecture was delivered under great physical strain, for he was not at all well at the time, and the disease (diabetes) detected last year, had gained very firm hold upon his constitution. Those, who closely watched him, were alarmed both at the change of his appearance, and the constant failure of strength in his speech.

In April, Keshub was ordered by his medical advisers to leave Calcutta for Simla on the Himalayas, and he departed with his family on the 22nd, reaching his destination on the 3rd of the next month "quite prostrated," writes his brother, "by fever and diarrhœa, which he had caught on the way. On his arrival he was placed under the treatment of Dr. Davies. Later accounts say that he was progressing favour-

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ably, though extremely weak." Keshub, however, had gone to the hills not without other purposes than the restoration of his health. In Calcutta, lately, the frequent disputes among his immediate disciples, and his regret at the decline of their apostolical life, led him to lay down certain special rules on the Bengali New Year's Day. He meditated a far larger undertaking now. He undoubtedly felt his life was ebbing away, though he never expressed, by the least word or indication, his misgivings on that point. He wanted, while he had the strength, to lay down a comprehensive Law of Religious Life for the whole Church of Indian Theism. He was more and more convinced every year that a new religion in a country like India, could never grow unless definite rules of conduct were enjoined by persons who had authority. A book of domestic ritual, called *Anusthan Paddhati*, had been attempted by Devendra Nath Tagore, but a *Samhita* or Law of Life, embracing every department of personal, domestic, and social duty no one had tried to give. There was no doubt in his mind, that such rules were wanted, and that he, as leader and minister, was the proper person to lay them down. So he wanted to make the performance of that duty the last and crowning act of his life, and he wanted to do it from the top of the sacred Himalayas. As soon, therefore, as he rallied from the attack of illness which had overtaken him on his first arrival, he began "the *Nava Samhita* (New Code) or the Sacred Laws of the Aryans of the New Dispensation." It appeared in instalments in the *New Dispensation* paper.

He had already promulgated the following ideal of the man of the New Dispensation in the year before:—

"1. I look upon woman as the daughter of God, and regard her with honour and affection. I cherish no impure thought or wish in regard to her. 2. I forgive and love mine enemies and do not indulge in anger when provoked by them. 3. I rejoice in other men's happiness, and do not feel envy or jealousy. 4. I am humble in disposition; there is no kind of pride in my heart; whether it be the pride of position, of wealth, or learning, or power, or religion. 5. I am an ascetic, and do not think of the morrow. I do not seek nor touch the riches of the world; I only accept the gifts which come from God. 6. I give religious instruction to my wife and family according to the best of my ability. 7. I am a lover of justice; I give every one his due; I give proper prices for things bought and the wages of servants in due time. 8. I speak the truth, nothing but the truth. I hate every manner of falsehood. 9. I am charitable to the poor and anxious to relieve suffering. According to my means I contribute money to charitable purposes. 10. I love all men,

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I always try to do good to my kind. I am not selfish. 11. My heart is fixed on divine and heavenly things. I am not given to worldliness. 12. I dearly love every heaven-set apostolic brother, and honour him. I am always anxious and active to establish unity in the apostolic community."

Keshub now wanted that the man of the New Dispensation should mould his daily life, perform all domestic and social duties, and regulate his dealings with his parents, wife, children, brothers and sisters, masters and servants, according to a definite code of laws.

The subjects of this Code were headed as follows:— House and House-keeping. The Householder's daily duties:— Leaving the bed. Daily meals. Business. Amusements. Studies. Charities. Domestic relations. Servants. Domestic ceremonies. Vows:—Virginity. Widowhood. Apostolic Life. Conquest of Passions. We give below a short digest of the various rules:—

"The first is about the believer's house. The house shall be kept clean, and every room, every part of it, equally attended to. The laws of health and sanitation are the laws of God. Not only the cleanliness but the beauty of the house shall be looked to. Fresh flowers and leaves shall be freely used to adorn it and fill it with perfume. In the house, a room shall be always set apart as the domestic sanctuary, in which all the articles and ornaments used during worship, should be kept clean, but no idolatrous symbol of any kind should be permitted. Suitable mottoes might decorate the walls. The householder shall rise early, sleeping seven hours. His first act shall be to praise and thank God. He shall then take some bodily exercise, glance at the newspapers of the day, and transact such business as demands immediate attention. He is to bathe in clean water, and during the bath shall remember that this act of washing is sacred, and "behold God in the shining waters, Who purifieth both the body and the mind." He shall remember Christ's Baptism at the time. Having bathed and put on clean clothing, the householder shall enter the domestic sanctuary, and there sit on his own appointed carpet or seat. These seats shall be assigned to each, and there shall be no disorder allowed about them. Divine service shall then take place in due order. The chief prayers must be fresh every day, and those who pray must remember that they are not only to speak to the Lord, but wait for His answer, because He responds to every sincere petition. After his devotions, the householder is to take his meals. This is not to be done in a thoughtless carnal manner, but in a spiritual mood of mind. As the bath reminds him of sacred baptism, the meal should remind him of the holy Eucharist. He must say grace before the food is taken, and behold God as a nourishing Force in the food. The food should be simple and economical, no wine is to be drunk, and meat should be abstained from by those who have taken the vow of poverty, and self-denial. The lady of the house shall direct what food is to be prepared, and the family physician order its kind and quality. During the meals

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there should be no moroseness, but the householder shall be cheerful, talking and smiling in good humour. After his meals, the householder shall proceed to his daily business with strict punctuality. But before he begins his work he shall cast himself upon the mercy and guidance of God. Whether in the shop, or bank, or court, or council chamber, he must remember that the eyes of the Lord are upon him, and that the place of business, as well as the instruments of the work, are sacred. He shall work diligently and faithfully, and not by fits and starts, preserving the equanimity and cheerfulness of his spirits amidst the worry and vexations of daily toil. If his passions are excited, he shall utter ejaculatory prayers entreating God to deliver him. He shall remember that true labour is true worship. The householder, after his daily work, shall seek amusement. He shall work and seek relaxation, never sacrificing one to the other, because both are from God. Harmless sports and games are good, but the highest and purest enjoyment is music, which shall be treated with honour. The householder shall devote some of his time to study books, but avoid vain and unprofitable reading. He shall keep a library of choice books in his house. The reading should be moderate, not excessive, and what is read should be digested and assimilated. Books of fiction should not be read too much, filthy books not at all, and atheistic books should be regarded with abomination. All scriptures are to be read with unsectarian reverence. The householder must spend some of his income, however small, in giving charities. He must honour the poor and needy, and count it a privilege to give. Charity should not be fitful, but a regular domestic institution. When the householder buys his monthly provisions, a part of them shall be set apart for the poor, and old clothes and things should be also laid aside for the same purpose. Grants shall be made to charitable societies, and if a man's means become straitened he has no right to deprive the poor. Charity should be varied thus:—To feed the hungry, to give water to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to nurse the sick, to build houses for the homeless, to console the bereaved, to relieve the sufferings of the widow and the orphan, to assist the indigent student with books, to help the establishment and maintenance of hospitals, schools, and churches, these are ordinary works of charity to which thou shalt apply thy heart and energy and substance whensoever occasion arises. Besides all this, when famines or epidemics break out, the householder shall render aid. In hot months he shall give cooling drinks, and in the cold months warm clothing. But the householder shall take care not to encourage idleness and pauperism, and give his charities as privately as possible, for true charity, he should remember, is not of the hand but of heart. Domestic relationships are all to be held as very sacred, and the home is to be regarded as the abode of the Lord. Children shall obey their parents, and labour with body and mind to do their filial duty. Parents shall train up their children in a simple and natural manner, without being too meddlesome. Hard theology should not be forced into the minds of the young, but moral training should be given them in early age. Both the father and the mother have their respective parts in training of the child, in order that its education may be complete. Develop in the young a taste for the poetry and beauty of nature, and cultivate in them a love of flowers. If there is a garden attached to the house,

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let them go about looking at plants and flowers, and let them also take part in gardening. And if there are domesticated animals and birds in the house, let the children be taught to treat them kindly, to feed them and caress them.

Brothers and sisters should love each other warmly. When they marry and separate, they shall continue to be loving, and must not cast away their brother and sister to please a husband or a wife. Matrimony is a divine institution, and ought to be honoured as such. Husband and wife are equal, and let them not raise questions of their superiority of sex. Let no one try to enslave the other, but let both do their appointed work. Domestic unfaithfulness is the greatest sin. The husband and the wife shall love each other passionately, and inasmuch as true wedlock is the union of souls, let them be more and more fully married throughout their lives. The householder shall treat his servants tenderly, and attend to their wants, as children entrusted to their care. The wages must be paid to them regularly, and they must not be overworked. They should not be tempted by carelessness and extravagance on the part of the master. They may be punished when undutiful, but should be rewarded if they have done well, and strict morality enforced among them. The householder shall perform domestic ceremonies, but must not place too much importance upon pompous symbolism. When a child is born there shall be rejoicing in the house, and thanksgiving unto God before the family altar. This is the *Jatkarma* ceremony. The next is *Namkaran*, or the giving of name to the child. The child should be bathed, ornamented with paste of sandal and flowers, and dressed in new clothes. The father shall pray for its welfare, and then the presiding minister shall take it in his arms, and pronounce prayer and benediction. The mother and female relatives shall afterwards put a little food into the mouth of the child, and friends and acquaintances make presents, and give blessings. When the boy or girl will have sufficiently grown, and been educated, they shall be brought before the religious preceptor, and go through the ceremony of initiation. This is called *Diklisha*. This is to be followed by the marriage ceremony, the particular rites of which have been often published. The funeral ceremonies should be performed with due solemnity. Hymns, prayers, and God's names shall be chanted on the death-bed. When life is extinct, the body should be washed and arranged, mourning friends and relatives should accompany it to the place of cremation. After it has been fully consumed, the ashes should be taken home, deposited in a vessel, and buried. When the period of mourning, extending at least over seven days, is over, the *Shraddha* (doing honour to the dead) ceremony shall be performed with prayers and hymns, and on the occasion charities should be given to various worthy objects. Besides these ceremonies it is also prescribed that certain vows should be taken, such as the vow of the conquest of passions; the vow of celibacy; the vow of widowhood; and the vow of apostolic life; the vow of devotees and the vow of ascetic householders."

Keshub anticipated that this *New Samhita** would be the cause of fresh divisions among his disciples. They would differ

"*নব সংহিতা।"

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in their interpretations of the spirit and the authority of the laws he gave. So, while he fully demanded the adoption of the *Samhita* on the part of the believers of the New Dispensation, he was careful to explain the nature of its application and authority. Hence before the code was published he wrote:—"The *New Samhita* will be shortly ready, and a day ought to be appointed for its formal promulgation among our people,—a day that will close the epoch of anarchy, self-will, and lawlessness, and usher in the kingdom of law, and discipline, and harmony. All our Churches in the metropolis and the provinces, and all individuals professing loyalty to the Divine Dispensation, ought to acknowledge and accept the Law on that occasion, for their own guidance, and the regulation of all their social and domestic concerns. Let not, however, the *Samhita* be a new fetish. It is no infallible gospel: it is not our holy scripture. It is only the national Law of the Aryans of the New Church in India, in which is embodied the spirit of the New Faith in its application to social life. It contains the essence of God's moral law adapted to the peculiar needs and character of reformed Hindus, and based upon their national instincts and traditions. It is essentially, not literally, Heaven's holy Injunction unto us of the New Church in India. We shall not, therefore, bow to its letter, but accept its spirit and its essence for our guidance."*

Till the commencement of the rainy season, he was comparatively well at Simla. His chronic complaint, vertigo and pain in the head had been nearly cured by the coolness of the Himalayan breeze, but he was steadily losing flesh. The diabetic symptoms had not at all abated, yet his brains were so clear that he rose early every morning, and for nearly three hours dictated to his eldest son, who thus took down large portions of the two last publications, the *Nava Samhita* and the *Yoga*. But for the rest of the day he could not do any headwork, and mostly engaged himself in turning out little articles of carpentry, neatly executed, and preserved in his household as specimens of his remarkable skill in manual and mechanical work. As the rains set in, he began to grow worse, till in August, vertigo, nausea, fever, cough, nervous debility, and various complications returned with severity.

*It is singular that those who published the *New Samhita* after Keshub's death, and insisted upon its authority, omitted this most important explanation. P. C. M.

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All mental work had to be discontinued, and though advised by medical men to stop at Simla till October, he had to leave in the middle of September, for fear he should not have the strength to attempt the homeward journey at all if he remained later on. There were external causes which aggravated his illness. One of these causes was the growing disunion and worldliness of his apostles, and hence the declining prospects of his cause. In the midst of all his absorbing devotions and spiritual labour, that thought visited him, and filled him with deep despondency. To his companions at the time, he spoke most openly of his apprehensions, and expressed his views almost about each one of his missionaries. He felt he was discarded from Calcutta, he wrote bitterly on the subject to his brother and others, he gave out a wish that if he got well to live permanently on the hills. Some of the prayers he published are unmistakable, and piercing in their sadness. The following appeared in the *New Dispensation* paper for July 29th :—

"Shall I regard my life and my mission as a failure? Tell me, my God. Comfort me with Thine assurance that there is still some hope, and that I may yet achieve some success. Great God, for many long years Thy servant has toiled and labored, in diverse ways and in various fields, to establish the kingdom of love and forgiveness among Thy people. I have tried humbly to preach the great doctrine of forgiveness which Thou hast taught me and impressed upon me, and to diffuse far and wide the principles of peace on earth and goodwill among men. I have labored practically to bring the angry, the vindictive, the fretful, the quarrelsome, the impatient and the vengeful into the paths of peace. In Thy strength and under Thy command I have struggled constantly to pour oil over troubled waters and to reconcile differences. But in vain. The deep anguish of my heart I have not concealed from Thee, and often and often have I opened my heart in prayer unto Thee. The angry quarrels of those arround me have pierced my heart and made it bleed profusely, and the multitudinous instances of revenge which I daily see before me torment my very bones. And I cry unto Thee, day and night, and find no rest. When will all this strife and contention in Thy household cease? When will my friends learn to love the enemy? When O! God, will the lion and the deer dwell in peace? Forgiveness these people will not learn; it is to them an abomination. Nay, they proudly rejoice in oppressing and tormenting and reviling their brothers for the least provocation that cometh from them, in returning evil for evil, and in persecuting their opponents. Break and soften the proud hearts of these people, O! God of love, and teach them to forgive those that trespass against them, if they seek Thy forgiveness for their trespasses against Thee. Where would we be, my God! if we had no assurance of Thy forgiving mercy? Father, teach this generation, love and kindness, and forgiveness, and graciously grant that I may ere long see a joyous band of forgiving souls in whom pride and anger have become impossible."

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Broken in health, despondent in spirit, but with infinite trust and love in the goodness of God, Keshub returned to Calcutta towards the end of October. Men had disappointed him, but God had blessed him beyond measure with spiritual insight and joy. Therefore, physically weak as he was, his mind was restless in devising new means to glorify his Father. For a long time, it was in his mind to establish a domestic sanctuary in Lily Cottage, where the male and female devotees of the neighbourhood might daily congregate for such true, loving worship as he had held with them for the greater part of his life. Hitherto he had devoted one of the best rooms in his residence to that purpose, but he now wanted to raise a separate structure for the glorification of God in his household. He had a double purpose in this. He wished to make Divine service a daily usage in his family, and he wished also to provide a refuge for the souls of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, the missionaries and their families. Probably he also stood in need of an agreeable and profitable diversion to counteract the unwholesome effects produced in his mind by the present disordered condition of affairs in the Church. But he had no money, and feared he might not find the co-operation he wanted. But difficulties of this kind had never daunted him before, and never depressed him now. One day in the beginning of November, as he was feebly walking in the garden, he ordered some workmen to be called, and directed them to demolish one side of the extensive brick enclosures of Lily Cottage. His friends were surprised, and did not understand what this could mean. The process of destruction disengaged a large quantity of bricks, and other building materials; with these he at once set about to erect the New Sanctuary or *Nava Devalaya*. To the east of his house, just skirting Upper Circular Road, there was a fine open plot of ground belonging to himself, and this he had long selected in his mind as the site. Whenever Keshub began any work of this kind, he was impatient to see it completed. He never gave any rest to the engineers, or workmen, and never gave any rest to himself. Now this impetuosity was redoubled by the secret consciousness that the building of the New Sanctuary was to be the last act of his life. The foundation was laid on the 8th November, and on this occasion he made each one of the apostles to lay on a brick and some mortar, in token of the spirit in which worship at the new sanctuary was to be conducted. When everybody else was full of anxiety about his health,

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and expressed great fears, Keshub never allowed the remotest expression to escape him about the nature of the termination of his illness, though in his own mind he had not the shadow of a doubt on that subject. But all through this period he worked with accelerated speed, as if to divert the attention of his family and friends from the inevitable. He had finished his devotional philosophy by the composition of "*Yoga*, Subjective and Objective." He had finished the composition of the "*New Samhita*." And now he was exceedingly anxious to complete the erection of a tabernacle, which, for his own family, and for his neighbours, he wanted to be the Household of God. He begged his engineering friends to decide about their plans at once; he entreated Brother Amrita Lal Bose, who had superintended the building of the *Brahma Mandir*, to finish the work. In the enforced idleness of disease, he sat almost the whole day near his window watching the progress of the workmen.

For about a month and half after his return, he showed some symptoms of improvement, but as the cold weather set in, he grew speedily worse. Many doctors were engaged, many kinds of treatment were attempted. Allopaths and Homœopaths tried their skill in succession; the practitioners of orthodox Hindu medicine (*Kavirajes*) were sometimes called in; Mahommedan *Hakeems* had given him their drugs. For a week or two he seemed to rally, then came a relapse. The latter end of November and the whole of December were spent in a continuous struggle between life and death. The complaint that in the midst of the growing debility gained upon him was a fearful and unaccountable pain about the loins, but every organ seemed more or less diseased. Amidst the respites of the pain, he engaged himself in correcting the proof sheets of the *New Samhita* and *Yoga* which were in the press, in giving directions about the New Sanctuary which was being built, and in making plans for a Fancy Fair (*Ananda Bazar*) which he wished to be held during the next anniversary of the Church (*Maghotsav*).

Toward the latter stages of his fatal illness, only a few weeks before the melancholy end, he was also anxious that a complete report of the Brahmo Somaj of India, during the whole period of his connection with it, should be written, showing both the successes and failures of that movement. He specially directed his cousin Joykrishna Sen, M.A., to write this report, and gave him to understand that after mentioning the facts of progress, he should devote a chapter

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to describe "Our Shortcomings and Failures." The writer of the report in a preliminary letter says:—"The chapter on 'Our Shortcomings and Failures' he particularly wished me to write. He was too ill at the time, but notwithstanding his illness which prevented his speaking to me, he wrote down the points on which he wanted me to write." What then were these points? The first failure enumerated was the decline of Asceticism among the Brahmo missionaries. His missionaries showed no change of outward life. They did not enter into worldly avocations, they were still as poor and simple in their daily habits as before. Perhaps their wants were more grievous now than before, owing to the inadequacy of public support. Many of them still cooked their own food, and ate it under the trees at Lily Cottage. The Mission Office doled out to them their daily supplies out of its scanty funds. Outwardly poverty, simplicity, suffering were the characteristics of the missionary body. Why then did the leader say that asceticism had failed? In his estimation these outer manifestations of ascetic life had very little value. He knew that nearly amongst all Hindu denominations, habits and self-sacrifices of very much greater rigor prevailed, without there being the apostolical virtue he demanded. He wanted that "we should become ascetics in spirit." In outward acts and words there was some strictness, "but the thoughts and ideas were not altogether pure. And as we pass in review our daily experiences, we find we still yield to temptations and allurements, we still allow our hands and hearts to be polluted by the touch of the world." Keshub's standard of asceticism then was not merely the display of rigor in diet and dress, an austere face, and an indigent exterior ; but it was utter unworldliness of spirit, the absolute conquest of carnality, the perfect purity of thought and idea. And what religious man is there in any denomination who will not pay homage to such a standard? A failure here was a serious disappointment indeed.

The second failure noticed is still more serious, it is the decline of inspiration. This again is another characteristic doctrine of the religious dispensation propounded by Keshub Chunder Sen. The nature of the shortcoming is thus explained—"There is greater respect paid now to reason and self than to conscience and God. Instead of the impulses and injunctions received through their soul, the missionaries pay greater heed to the dictates of reason, and the commands of authority." Again, it is said "in a Church which

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acknowledges no mediator between God and man, which preaches the Fatherhood of God, and Brotherhood of man, which claims to receive inspiration from the Spirit of all truth in all it does, it would be in the highest degree improper if individual men allowed themselves to be guided by a Pope in matters of faith." "Therefore it must be checked at once, and missionaries must learn that they are to rely for their salvation upon the merits of no saint or saviour, but upon Divine mercy alone. The Holy Ghost is the sole authority, and to Him are all references to be made, and by Him are they to be guided in their journey through life."

The shortcoming indicated here points out a two-fold evil. Firstly, the Brahmo missionaries have suffered a loss of spirit in receiving fewer impulses than before in their progress to piety and righteousness. And secondly, they have acquired the habit of being unduly and alarmingly subservient to "Authority," to the dictates of "a Pope." The first part of the accusation is intelligible enough. But what does the second part mean? Whose authority is alluded to? What "human commands," and what sort of "Pope" guided the missionaries in matters of faith? It is a notorious fact that their mutual reverence, then as now, is of the meagerest description. It is equally well-known they have cared very little for what the public thought of them. Whose authority kept them back then from the ideal of apostolical life? The truth cannot be disguised that Keshub, towards the end of his life, bitterly felt that his intimate disciples set up his authority as a barrier between the Holy Spirit and their own souls. He was put on the pedestal of a Pope, whose "human commands" took the place of "the impulses and injunctions that come through the soul." His repeated warnings and counsels to ward off this evil had failed. His self-humiliations, and public confessions of sinfulness produced no effect, human nature repeated its old weakness "of relying upon the merits of a saint, or a saviour." For a long time Keshub had comforted himself with the thought that the great reliance placed upon his personal authority would put in his hands some days the power of converting the tendency of dependence upon man into absolute dependence upon God. If they obeyed him in everything, why should they not obey him when he declared that he was nothing, and God was all in all? But here he failed. Long had the critics of the Brahmo Somaj of India accused its missionaries of subservience to the authority of one man. Keshub never wanted this

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subservience, but he secretly felt it was there, and he inwardly determined to cure the evil It was a grievous disappointment to him, therefore, to fail in this, and to confirm the accusation laid against his own Church. He had sufficiently exonerated himself from all complicity with the evil. He had always warned his Church, and when his warning was unheeded, he denounced the evil unmistakably, though the denunciation laid the axe at the root of the peculiar relationship in which some of his followers held him. Thus with his last breath Keshub Chunder Sen disclaimed personal pretensions as a mediator or a Pope and gave all authority, all power, all glory to God alone.

The third shortcoming pointed out is "the decay of brotherhood and mutual forgiveness," and the growth of "proud, selfish individuality." Time has fully proved what this meant. The spirit of fault-finding and mutual recrimination, to which allusion has been often made, was mistaken at first as honest criticism, which would tend to the correction of shortcomings in the apostolic body. But it was not criticism whose basis was love; it was the intolerance of religious pride, it was the venom of strong, deep, mutual dislike. The leader, in whom every one professed to have confidence and love, strained his utmost influence to put a stop to it when he perceived the dangerous consequences it threatened. But he entirely failed. The failure preyed upon his spirits, and produced disappointment and despondency, which aggravated the effects of the fatal illness he was suffering from. Yet all to no effect. His published prayers on this subject were heart-rending, his private letters full of the most bitter lamentations. And what was worst of all, he suspected that the mutual disesteem extended in some cases to his own character. The apostolical organisation of the Brahmo Somaj was based on the principle of mutual love and goodwill. A failure here meant very nearly the failure of Keshub's principal life-work, yet such a failure he caused to be recorded in the last official report written by his direction.

Keshub Chunder Sen was the apostle of harmony. Harmony is the chief character of the New Dispensation, the harmony of spiritual culture. And the want of this harmony of character is the last shortcoming pointed out by the Minister. "Our life and character present a strange absence of harmony. We are sorry we do not find a proper culture of the several elements amongst us. The character of most is ill-regulated, and instead of being steady in the exercise of

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devotion and duty, it performs the one at the expense of the other."

In estimating the success of his work, the truth cannot be hidden that Keshub Chunder Sen had tried to do too much in his latter days, and it is not in nature for one man to achieve success in all that he attempted within the course of a single lifetime. He laid down grand ideals of moral and spiritual character. He formed plans of social and practical reform in every department of personal and national life. He aimed at the formation of a Universal Church. In the singularity of his genius, and in his unexampled self-devotedness and industry, he was himself faithful to those ideas till his last moment. The success of which he speaks in the eleventh chapter of the *Jeevan Veda* relates to the immediate effects of this enthusiastic self-consecration. The effects were brilliant and unmistakable. But he could not make these effects real in others. He was the truest and noblest result of his own religion. Outside himself, the result was disappointing. But in his writings and character he has left influences which shall undoubtedly mould the future of his nation, and the faith he came to establish. Well may we believe that his standards were so exalted, his doctrines were so universal, that it was not possible for his associates to comprehend them, far less to live up to them. Well may we believe that it will take generations to carry them out in their fulness. But the stern fact remains that his Church has so far failed to be faithful to his ideals. We trust and pray that the God of the New Dispensation may yet open the eyes of its chief representatives to follow the example set by their Minister, and rescue from impending ruin the cause for which he laboured, lived, and died.

In the prostration of his disease, Keshub was keenly sensitive to this downward course of things, and how did he shake off the painful and desponding thoughts? By an intense form of spiritual exercise. For some time past he had given special attention to the practice of *Yoga*. It was absorbed communion with the spirit of God. While at Simla he spent much time in this kind of devotion. Whenever he visited the hills on former occasions he assiduously cultivated the habit. This time at Simla the absorption took the form of ecstacy. The conscious presence of a Supreme Loving Personality enraptured him. He cried, he laughed violently; he talked vociferously; he poured out all his troubles into the bosom of this Pitying Presence. His friends and relatives

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were alarmed at these strange excitements. But he steadily persevered in the practice, and resorted to it as the chief consolation in his physical and mental sufferings. Lest any one should misunderstand the nature of this *Yoga* exercise, he wrote towards the latter part of his sojourn on the Himalayas a series of elaborate essays on the subject, and sent them for publication to the New York *Independent* under the title of "*Yoga*, Subjective and Objective." These have been subsequently published in the form of a little book, the most original and thoughtful perhaps of all his writings. It gives a lucid exposition of the whole philosophy of his devotions.

He defines *Yoga* as "Communion with God," and explains it thus:—

"The created soul, in its worldly and sinful condition, lives separate and estranged from the Supreme Soul. A reconciliation is needed; nay, more than a mere reconciliation. A harmonious union is sought and realised. This union with the Deity is the real secret of Hindu *Yoga*. It is spiritual unification; it is a consciousness of two in one; duality in unity."

The union with God is realised in three different ways; first, in nature; secondly, in the soul; and thirdly, in history.

"We see, in the earliest or *Vedic* period, communion with God in Nature; this is objective *Yoga*. Then we have, in the *Vedantic* period, communion with God in the soul; this is subjective *Yoga*. Thirdly, in the *Puranic* period, we find communion with God in History or with the God of Providence; this is *Bhakti*, or *Bhakti Yoga*."

"The soul of man," we are told "first seeks God in Nature. His earliest theology is the knowledge of Nature, or natural theology. His earliest devotion is the worship of Nature. He is just ushered into the physical world, and he is at once struck with the wonders of creation. Not only is the universe grand and beautiful. . . . but Nature moves and lives, and grows. Hence Nature is not only a marvel, but a deep Mystery. Who or what can this Great Mystery be that moves and animates the universe?. . . . .He worships anything and everything that excites in him wonder, reverence, gratitude." "This instinctive worship of Nature" says he "is neither pantheism nor polytheism, but the mere worship of Force."

But he distinguishes between the idea of Force as set forth by modern scientists, and as found in the *Vedic* times. The former only see "Matter-force" which leads to agnosticism and atheism, but "the *Rishi* (Devotee) recognised a Personal

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Force," not as a conclusion from a premise, but from "the highest causal intuition, which is the germ of scientific *Yoga* vision."

"The efficient cause is also a personal cause; so says the intuitive consciousness in man; the two are apprehended simultaneously—efficiency and personality—in one and the same act of cognitive perception."

He explains the process by which the Hindu devotee realises the force of Personality in Nature. With his untutored, yet trained eye, he saw a Person behind all the wonders and beauties of creation, and therefore he believed, trusted, loved and adored all at once. "He clearly saw a Person where others see dimly mere force enveloped in mists. . . . Surely this is *Yoga* vision, though not in its perfect form. It is more poetical than philosophical, more mystical than scientific, more a matter of faith than of reason and thought." He then vindicates such vision during the present times, and gives an analysis of his own feelings.

"In moments of devotional excitement and profound meditation, men of faith, in all ages and climes, vividly realised the presence of God in the material universe. In this state of mind they stand awe-struck, and overpowered by a peculiar emotion which can hardly be described, before the Spirit's Presence in nature. When it comes, how it comes, they know not. It seems to be a mystery of faith, but it is a fact, nevertheless. What happens in a small measure to ordinary humanity bursts like a flood of light upon great geniuses. It is the same thing only in astonishing profusion. Two instances, exceptionally striking, will suffice for illustration."

He then illustrates this *Yoga* vision from the instances of Moses and Jesus, the first of whom perceived the Divine presence in the burning bush, and the latter in the opening heavens and descending dove.

"To see in an instant the very God of the universe in a flying bird, not only as an inspiring vital force, but as a blazing personal Divinity, is a feat of spiritual perception to which only the Son of God was equal. He showed us in perfection what we all can, but imperfectly achieve with our little eye of faith."

It was his object to dissociate the practice of *Yoga* from everything local or accidental, from all impure admixtures of polytheism and pantheism, to refine and perfect it "in a pure theistic and universal principle." He, therefore, gives a *rationale* of the process by which the transcendental practice ought to be carried on. The devotee stands face to face with great and beautiful natural objects. "The force that bursts

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upon his vision is one in which all that is in the effect is summed up as in the primitive cause,—power, intelligence, love and beauty. He beholds a Person at once true, good, and beautiful. He sees himself and the universe, the *me* and the *not—me,* living and moving in a central will-force, in an intelligent and loving personality. And as his cognitive *faculties* apprehend this almighty, all-wise, and all-good Person, his heart overflows with emotions, and gratitude; trust, reverence, wonder, love, joy and enthusiasm all surge up and make his vision sweet indeed. All this takes place instantly. Faith, intellect,. and feeling form in a moment one eye, as it were, and the observer observes with scientific accuracy, with firm faith, and with abounding joy. Such God-consciousness grows in vividness and joy as the mind is more concentrated in it, till it becomes quite absorbing. All the massive doors of the universe are now flung open. All objects, animate and inanimate, open up their inner sanctuary. The temple doors, hitherto closed, are suddenly unlocked as if by magic influence, and the Deity within shines upon the devout eye of the observer. A thick curtain hitherto hung over the face of the universe and veiled all its wondrous secrets. Anon, the curtain rolls up, and the veiled God is at once unveiled before the clear vision of the *Yogi.* The observer and the observed, the subject and the object, the soul and All-soul, the son and the Father hitherto stood separated, and nature intervened as a heavy stone-wall. Man knew his God obscurely, and sent up his prayers to his unknown residence in the cloud lands. The devotee, with all his theology and devotion, stood myriads of miles away from the object of his adoration."

"Now that the eye of the scientific observer has been quickened and opened by *Yoga,* he at once removes the obstruction, pulls down the barrier and advances to his God unimpeded. A Divinity cognised mediately is now perceived immediately. An absent God is now a present God. The separated two thus stand before each other, face to face. Then union takes place through spiritual affinity as they approach and flow into each other. At first there is mutual attraction, then communion, then intercommunion, then absorption. Constant intercourse consolidates union, and makes it more real and sweet, till at last the bond of union becomes indissoluble.....The *Yogi's* eye moves right and left, runs east, west, north, and south, dashing through infinite space, and through every object; every force, every law in nature meets his omnipresent King, and becomes one with Him. Steam and electricity, light and heat directly reveal Him. The force of gravitation is only a beautiful vista through which He is described. The laboratory and the observatory, the museum and the dissecting room are aglow with His presence. The miscroscope and the telescope, like sacred eyes, reveal new worlds of beauty."

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This closes the chapters on *Vedic* or *Objective Yoga*, and next we have a dissertation on Subjective or *Vedantic Yoga*. "During the period of this form of *Yoga*, the Hindu mind is retreating from external nature into the inner world. Not observation, but, introspection, not the objective but the subjective is now the watchword of Aryan theology. The *Rishi* (Devotee) is no longer impulsive and poetical, but sedate and philosophical. He has done with the outside world; he has gathered all the materials furnished by the senses. . . . . We now see the *Vedantic* sage absorbed in contemplation, and cultivating the deepest communion with the Supreme Spirit with closed eyes. The *Vedic* poet was all objective. . . . the *Vedantist* is all subjective, his way to the unseen lies through the depths of his inner nature. His is the higher order of *Yoga*." The process is thus described:—

"All is tranquil and hushed within. Only a sense of self fills the soul. The devotee calls out to it to disappear. And before his "thundering voice" self vanishes away. Anon, the Infinite bursts upon his view. He shines as something awfully real, a burning reality. From the depths of his being this presence surges up as the Fountain of vitality. From above It descends like a continued shower of inspiration. From all sides It draws near as the presence of One Who is dearest and nearest. Deeper insight makes the revelation brighter, and this Presence sweeter. The more the *Yogi* looks at this reality, the more distinctly he traces its essential features and characteristics. A mere presence is soon transformed into a Person, all whose attributes so far as they are visible to human ken, are plainly and clearly perceived. Here is Intelligence, seen by the eye of Reason; there Love which the eye of Love apprehends; here Holiness, revealed to the eye of Conscience; and then in the centre Will-force, or Personality, in which all these attributes inhere. As the eye to light, and the ear to sound are mysteriously linked, so the various organs of the self-bereft soul at once and naturally unite with their corresponding attractions in the Infinite Soul. As *Yoga* ripens and develops, these spirit-bonds become tighter and draw the Infinite more and more into the finite soul. Gradually the Almighty overpowers the *Yogi's* little soul, the All-wise confounds his wisdom, the All-merciful carries away his love, the All-holy dazzles his conscience. Thus overpowered, captivated and entranced, the devotee looks more steadily at this God-presence, and he soon finds beauty ineffable, beaming forth from the countenance of this peculiarly attractive Person. Whatever or Whoever He may be—who knows? He is indeed a graceful Person, a sweet moral Being, a joyous Spirit. If He confounds us by His greatness, and dazzles us by His Holiness, which myriads of suns cannot equal, He is also a charming Sight, a gladdening Presence, a Serenity and a Sweetness surpassing myriads of lunar orbs. Father and Mother, Friend and Guide, Teacher and Saviour, Comforter and Gladdener, are all combined in this one Person, and if there is any such thing as spiritual smile, the sweetest and the loveliest smile plays on the lips of this supremely beautiful Person. He is moral

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beauty in perfection. And His word, that inspires and enlightens, is moral music in perfection. Who that has seen that beauty can forget it? Who that has listened to that sweet voice in conscience can turn away from it? Who that has tasted the nectar of that delicious Presence can lay aside the sweet cup? None. In deepest *Yoga* the soul is completely enraptured. In God the *Yogi* has sunk deep, never to rise again."

Such was the spiritual absorption into which Keshub latterly habituated himself.

He completed his forty-fifth year on the 19th November, 1883, and his birthday was celebrated with great pomp and rejoicing. He presided at the *Nam Karan* (name-giving) ceremony of his grandchildren in the beginning of December. A slight, apparent improvement in his health continued. He received the visits of the Bishop of Calcutta, *Paramhansa* Ram Krishna and the Venerable Devendra Nath Tagore. His conversation with them was deeply spiritual, especially with Devendra Nath upon whom he always looked as his spiritual father. He bowed at the latter's feet, took his hand and put it on his head, as if courting his benediction. Devendra Nath lovingly embraced him, and talked to him of the mercy of the Heavenly Father as realised in the time of danger and disease. Keshub warmly responded to every sentiment, and all his visitors parted him hopefully, seeing how hopeful and strong in spirit he felt. In the meanwhile the work of the new sanctuary was pushed on with vigour, he busily corrected the proof-sheets of the *Yoga* treatise, the programme of the anniversary festival (মাঘোৎসব) was discussed, the *Ananda Bazar* (আনন্দ বাজার) preparations were made on a grand scale, and the Minister insisted that not a jot or title of the annual festival was on any account to be abated by reason of his illness.

In the last week of December it appeared in the *New Dispensation* paper that "the minister had suffered another relapse, and the state of his health was critical." The consecration ceremony of the new sanctuary was to take place on the 1st January, 1884, and on that day Keshub's disease had nearly reached its culmination. He dragged himself to his bedroom window whence the new edifice was visible, and insisted on being taken downstairs to preside over the ceremony. Expostulations were in vain, he sternly demanded it, and when he demanded a thing, he had to be obeyed. They put him on a chair, and took him into the damp, unfinished hall to the astonishment of the whole congregation. He was carried, and seated on the new marble pulpit, and in a very feeble, almost inaudible voice cried "নমঃ সচ্চিদানন্দ হরে"

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"Salutation to the God of truth, wisdom, and joy!" Then with folded up-raised hands, with the simple accents of a child, he prayed thus:—"I have come, O Mother, into Thy sanctuary. They all forbade me, but I have somehow just succeeded to bring myself here. Mother, Thou holdest this place, and reignest here. This is Thy *Devalaya* (Sanctuary). "নমঃ সচ্চিদানন্দ হরে" (Adore the Redeemer Who is Truth, Wisdom and Joy). This day, the first of January, 1884, the 18th *Paus,* in Thy holy presence, and in the presence of Thy devotees, here as well as in Heaven, O! Thou Spirit Mother, this new *Devalaya* is consecrated. Thou knowest, O! Supreme Mother, that the number of *Bhaktas* who came from distant parts to enjoy Thy festivals on previous occasions was so great that I could not make room for them in my house. Hence it was always my wish to pick up a few bricks, and build a new sanctuary to Thee. To fulfil that desire Thou hast now built this place of worship with Thine own hands for the sanctification of my family, of this neighbourhood, this city, and the whole world. This place where I worship my Mother is my *Brindaban,* my *Kashi,* my *Mecca,* my Jerusalem.* Bless, O! Mother, that Thy devotees may worship Thee here, behold Thy loving face, and find peace after the misery of disunion with Thee. Dear brethren, will you not worship my Divine Mother with the flower of *Bhakti*? I have seen that this flower of love offered even by the most humble of Her children is so highly prized by Her, that She carries it to Her *Baikuntha,* and invites all Her *Bhaktas* there to come and see it. Ye know not O! brethren, how anxious the Mother is to receive your offerings, and what great care She taketh to store up for you in the world to come Her most sacred treasures. Accept, dear brethren, this infinitely Loving Mother, and ever rejoice in Her. If you worship my Mother and realise Her presence, there can be no more sin and weakness, sorrow and affliction. My Mother is my health and prosperity, my peace and beauty, my life and immortality. I am happy amidst the agonies of my disease in the presence of my Mother, and may this my happiness be yours also. I will not speak more, because I fear they will rebuke me if I do." দৈনিক প্রার্থনা।

This was Keshub's last recorded prayer, his last appearance before his devoted congregation. Who could then,

*Places of pilgrimage.

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though the occasion was most affecting, anticipate what would take place in a week? The effort and exposure of the 1st January produced a decided effect upon his sinking constitution, every symptom was aggravated, and the pain in the loins, of which we have already spoken, became insufferable. On Sunday, the 6th Jan. when the disease took a very alarming form, the ladies of the household became frantic with grief, and when Keshub was asked to say something to reassure them, "What more have I to say?" he replied "If I speak at all I will speak of *Baikuntha* (Paradise) and that will make them cry all the more." When the agnoy of suffering was most intense, and it was equally intense day and night, he found relief in the short syllables *"Baba"* and *"Ma,"* familiar expressions for Father and Mother. At other times in his life he had invariably preserved a most stoic silence in the torment of physical pain. Now his cries were loud and ceaseless. Why so? Evidently under the disguise of bodily suffering he called upon his Heavenly Parent, night and day. The agonised cries of *Baba* and *Ma,* that resounded through the house and neighbourhood, amidst all the noise of day, and penetrated the stillness of night, were a perpetual invocation to the Eternal Spirit to visit his prostrate body and parting soul. The doctors, of whom there were many, both European and Indian, being alarmed that the dreadful pain must soon shatter his poor remnant of strength, and prematurely bring on a catastrophe, administered powerful narcotics by injection. This produced prolonged intervals of stupor. As soon as he awoke the agony returned with increased vehemence. He became restless, ceaselessly turning from side to side, and pitiously moaning. During some of these awakings he addressed words of heart-rending pathos to those around. He rested his head for a few minutes on his mother's bosom, and said, "Mother, can nothing cure my pain?" "The pain," she cried "is the result of my sins, the righteous son suffers for the wretched parent's unworthiness." "Say not so, do not say so, Mother dear, where can there be another mother like you? Have I not inherited your virtues? Know that the Supreme Mother sends me all this for my own good. She plays with me, turns me now on one side, now on another." Then at another moment he put his arm round the neck of Troylokya Nath, the Singing Apostle, and said "O Brother, dear Brother of my heart, what beautiful songs have you sung to me. I will hear them again, I will hear them again in heaven." Similarly he embraced both his elder and

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younger brothers. When asked what provision he wanted to make for his family, he said "I have no provision to make; they will be provided for by Him Whose household they are." What with the stupefying medicines, what with the frightful pain, he was fast becoming speechless, and sometimes unconscious. But even then it was repeatedly manifest that his *Yoga* ecstacy visited him, for during the fatal week from the 1st to the 8th January, at certain intervals, he cried and laughed, and plaintively talked to the unseen Spirit of God. But for the last two or three days this became less and less frequent, and excepting the occasional feeble utterances of pain he was still, and outwardly insensible.* Yet strange to say, when-

*Dr. J. F. M'Counnel (Professor, Calcutta Medical College) who attended Keshub during the last week of his illness gives the following account of the final symptoms:—

"I first saw the late Babu Keshub Chunder Sen in the afternoon of the 4th January, 1884. At that time (4 p.m.) he was suffering from agonising pain in the lower part of the left side of the abdomen, was greatly prostrated, and restless, but quite conscious and able to converse. The cause of the pain was somewhat obscure, but from the history of the case and other circumstances we came to the conclusion that it pointed more or less distinctly to renal colic. The first and paramount object was to give, if possible, immediate relief. One-third of a grain of morphia and 1-60 gr. of atropia (in solution) were injected hypodermically, and fomentations ordered to be applied continuously, and a saline mixture prescribed. The injection gave almost immediate relief, which, moreover, lasted until about 1 a.m. on the morning of the 5th January. A fresh and severe exacerbation then set in, which necessitated a further similar injection but smaller in quantity, *i.e.*, only ¼ grain of morphia. This again gave great relief, but, unfortunately, the patient being very susceptible to narcotics, much drowsiness was observed at my next visit (8-30 a.m., 5th January), and as the paroxysms of pain were less severe, we decided not to inject again unless absolutely obliged to. The nature of the case was very much cleared up on this day, as evidence of the passage of gravel was distinct, and we were thereby buoyed up with hope that the obstruction would gradually give way and permanent relief be afforded. All this day the patient was somewhat drowsy, but took food fairly well and answered enquiries,—taking an interest in all that was being done for him. Matters stood thus until the 6th January, and now a fresh complication arose, *viz.*, jaundice from imperfect biliary elimination. The pain was still experienced at short intervals, but much relief received by fomentations and pressure. External sedatives were employed and counter-irritation over the liver; but no opiates by mouth were considered advisable. Dr. Harvey (Principal, Medical College, Calcutta) saw the patient with me this afternoon and concurred with the general plan of treatment proposed. On the 7th January, there were more distinct evidences of blood-poisoning; the patient was found to be gradually becoming more and more insensible, the jaundice deepening, and

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ever amidst the fast-approaching darkness of the final moment, and apparent failure of sense, the Singing Apostle sang some of the favorite hymns, he showed unmistakable signs of listening with deep attention and evident relief. The whole of Monday, the 7th January, both day and night, was a prolonged period of fearful anxiety and pain to every one. Great crowds who came to visit, stood silent and awestruck in the *veranda* and courtyard. The many doctors drove in and out every few minutes, talking in solemn whispers, with

great reluctance to nourishment of any kind exhibited. It now simply became a question of how to prolong life in the hope that the failing vital powers might still rally. No medicines could be taken, and food only in small quantities. The latter was carefully administered (chiefly milk) and combined with diffusible and alcoholic stimulants. By this means the patient was kept alive all that day (the 7th), although towards evening it became most difficult to give even food by the mouth. I left the house at 4-30 a.m. on the morning of the 8th instant. Death took place, I believe, about 10 a.m., the same day."

Dr. Bhagavan Chandra Rudra (Eminent Medical Practitioner, Calcutta) writes as follows:—

"While I was strolling along with you one evening at Darjeeling, our conversation turned upon the subject of the nature of the malady from which our illustrious countryman Keshub Chunder Sen had suffered and which terminated fatally in so short a time. I had the honor of attending him for about a week prior to his departure from this world. His chief complaint was agonising pain in the abodomen extending from the liver to the groin. Sedatives and palliatives were employed, but they were of no avail. The pain increased and at times became so excruciating that our minister continuously groaned and was very restless. Two or three days previous to his death, large deposits of gravel (chiefly composed of uric acid) were detected. That cleared the diagnosis of the case, and the origin of that unbearable pain was traced. Proper medicines were administered which gave him only temporary relief. His case became hopeless and baffled all attempts of medical ingenuity.

He could discern amidst all his sufferings that the date of the dissolution of his body was not distant. The evening before his death he called in question the efficacy of medicines, and when solemn silence was maintained by the attending doctors, what a marvellous change was observed in him! From groaning and restlessness, there was a sudden change to that serene composure of the mind which he retained for some hours, and which deepened, as I am led to believe, into coma next morning. Such a remarkable change could not at first be the effect of uremea or cholemea which the doctors pronounced. I am of opinion that that sudden change was the inevitable result of self-concentration, or abstraction from the external world including his own body. Thenceforth he exhibited no signs of feeling that terrible pain which made him once cry out for medical

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despondent faces. Brahmo Missionaries, devoted members of the congregation, numerous friends and relatives, sat or stood, or lay down, overwatching and tired, wherever they found a little space. The frantic mother and wife, daughters and sons filled the house with lamentations wihch no one had the heart to control. And amidst each lull of this many-voiced wretchedness, Keshub's faint dying moans were heard. They still shaped inarticulately the words "Father!" "Mother!" Troylokya Nath sang his last hymn:—

"যদি হয় সম্ভব, হে প্রাণ বল্লভ, কর এই পানপাত্র স্থানান্তর।
কিন্তু নয় আমার, হউক তোমার, ইচ্ছাপূর্ণ ঘোর দুঃখের ভিতর।"

ব্রহ্ম সঙ্গীত।—

"If it be possible, O! Lord of life, remove this cup,
Yet not mine, but Thy will be done—even amidst this awful sorrow."

In a moment, the patient was still, the moans ceased, and a feeble smile lighted up the corners of his mouth. But directly the song was over, the expressions of pain returned. The hard-breathings, so prophetic of the end, had begun early, and lasted more than twelve hours. The assembled relatives and apostles who surrounded the bed all the time were, every moment, expecting his release. As the darkness of that long night of terror faded into the indistinct morning twilight, the congregation chanted the solemn Sanskrit *Stotra*

help. Listlessly he tossed about in bed but the occasional hymns which his followers sang served to lull him into quietude. I am inclined to say that he retained consciousness for some hours, while he lay insensible to his sufferings.

What the origin was of that abnormal product (gravels in the urine) that caused such dreadful suffering was the principal question which I tried to solve. I was disposed to think, subject, however, to correction, that our patient was not used to take animal food for a long time, and as his digestive organs were not prepared to fully assimilate it, that sudden alteration of diet from exclusively vegetable, to chiefly animal food, which was forced upon him, might have caused mal-assimilation, and such inferior and abnormal product of digestion as gravels.

Above all one thing is certain, *viz.*, *Diabetes Mellitus* to which he was subject for a long time, gradually wrought so serious a mischief in the liver and kidneys as to lead at last to uremea and cholemea which were the immediate causes of death. I remain, very truly yours, B. C. RUDRA."

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of the hundred and eight Divine names.* The departing soul even then showed a symptom of joining the chant. Unconscious to all else, he was merged mysteriously into the one lingering consciousness of the Great Familiar Presence. Less on earth, more in heaven, life's last sacrament drew his closing sense. The twilight broke into dawn, the dawn into morning, the first sunshine poured into that crowded chamber of death. The night lamp, still allowed to burn, gave its pale flicker from the side of the bed. The master's spirit still lingered in its worn earthly habitation. The breathing, however, became fainter and harder, the struggle relaxed every moment, till at 53 minutes past 9 on Tuesday morning, the 8th January, 1884, Keshub Chunder Sen breathed his last. Not a muscle was strained, not a feature was rigid, not a mark of the prolonged struggle remained behind. But as the faithful watchers still gazed on that placid countenance, and the great household burst out into an uproar of grief, behold the lustre of an unearthly smile stole over the majestic features!

*ব্রহ্মস্তোত্রম্।

*"নমোঽকিঞ্চননাথায় নমোঽমৃত নমোঽভয়।
অস্তর্য্যামিন্নন্তরাত্মন্ নমোঽনন্তাক্ষয়ায় তে॥
নমোঽগতিগতে তুভ্যং নমস্তেঽখিলকারণ।
অরূপায় নমোঽনাথবন্ধো অধমতারণ॥
নমস্তুভ্যং কাতরাণাং শরণায় কৃপোদধে।
করুণানিধয়ে কল্পতরো কলুষনাশন॥
নমোগুণনিধানায় গতিনাথায় চিন্ময়।
চিন্তামণে চিদানন্দ নমশ্চিরসখে নমঃ॥
নমস্তে জগদাধার জীবানাং জীবনায় চ।
জ্যোতির্ম্ময় জগন্নাথ জগৎপালন তে নমঃ॥
নমস্তুভ্যং দয়েশায় দারিদ্র্যভঞ্জনায় তে।
দীনবন্ধো দর্পহারিন্ রত্নায় দুর্লভায় চ॥
নমো দেবায় দীনানাং পালকায় নমোনমঃ।
দয়াময়ায় তে ধর্ম্মরাজায় ধ্রুব নিত্য চ॥
নমস্তুভ্যং নিরুপম নিষ্কলঙ্ক নিরঞ্জন।
নিত্যানন্দায় নিখিলাশ্রয়ায় নয়নাঞ্জন॥
নমস্তে নির্ব্বিকারায় পিত্রে পাত্রে নমোঽস্তু তে
পরাৎপর পরব্রহ্মন পাষণ্ডদলনায় তে॥
নমঃ প্রস্রবণ প্রীতের্নমঃ পতিতপাবন।
পুণ্যালয় পরিত্রাতঃ পূর্ণ প্রাণধনায় চ॥

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The face had not lost, but gained fulness from the touch of death. It was not a smile so much, as the light of joy which fathers all smiling. It was the approaching light of the full-orbed moon behind mountain solitudes, it was the identical expression of profound happiness which illumined his whole countenance, when his communion with God was deepest. Every one remembered it so well. What brought it back when life was extinct? It seemed to be the bond of identity between time and eternity, the blessedness of union between life and immortality, the afterglow of the ascended spirit as it entered into its glorious repose. They marvelled at it. The wife clung to the lifeless feet, bedewed them with tears, and cried out, "I got a divine being for my husband. I knew not, nor recognised thee when thou wert with me, what will become of me now!" Keshub's mother took his lifeless form to her bosom, and said, "Child, in thy blessed image I see no man. It is the beauty of *Mahadeva*!" But Keshub smiled at all this passing sorrow. Bereft of every unreality, he had gone where all tears had for ever been wiped away. Rest there, O! beloved of many

নমঃ প্রেমন্ পুরাণায় পবিত্রায়পরেশ্বর।
প্রভো প্রসন্নবদন পরমাত্মন্ প্রজাপতে॥
নমো বিশ্বপতে ব্রহ্মন্ বিপদ্বারণ তে বিভো।
বিজয়ায় বিধাতস্তে নমো বিঘ্নবিনাশন॥
নমো ভক্তবৎসলায় নমো ভুবনমোহন।
ভূমন্ ভবাব্ধিকাণ্ডারিন্ ভবভীতিহরায় চ॥
নমস্তে মঙ্গলনিধে নমস্তে মহিমার্ণব।
মুক্তিদাতর্মহন্ মোক্ষধাম্নে মৃত্যুঞ্জয়ায় তে॥
নমো নমোঽস্তু যোগেশ শান্তেরাকর শুদ্ধ চ।
শ্রীনিবাস স্বর্গরাজ স্বয়ম্ভো স্বপ্রকাশ তে॥
নমঃ সদ্গুরবে সারাৎসারায় সুন্দরায় চ।
সর্ব্বব্যাপিন্ সর্ব্বমূলাধারায়াস্তু নমোনমঃ॥
নমোঽস্তু সর্ব্বারাধ্যায় নমোঽস্তু সর্ব্বসাক্ষিণে।
সুধাসিন্ধো সিদ্ধিদাতঃ সুখস্নেহময়ায় চ॥
নমঃ স্রষ্ট্রে নমঃ সর্ব্বশক্তিমংস্তে নমোনমঃ।
সনাতনায় সত্যায় নমঃ সর্ব্বোত্তমায় চ॥
হৃদয়াভিরঞ্জনায় হৃদয়েশ নমোনমঃ।
নামান্যেতানি গৃহ্ণন্তং পতিতং মাং সমুদ্ধর॥
ইত্যষ্টোত্তরশতনাম্না ব্রহ্মস্তোত্রং
সমাপ্তম্॥"

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hearts, hope of many causes, rest now in thy glory in the abode of the blessed! Thy cares and sufferings were many; very ill-recompensed here. But thou hast built on the everlasting foundations, thou hast shown the light of undying example, thou hast enriched all humanity.

The disciples carefully washed, and robed the departed master. Wreathed with garlands of fragrant flowers, dressed in silks of the purest white, supported on the whitest and softest of beds, the body was brought down into the New Sanctuary, and laid out in state. Just seven days ago, feeble and tottering, that prostrate form had ascended the pulpit which now remained unoccupied with a ghastly vacancy. The fingers still retained the ink-marks which stained them by frequent corrections of the proof-sheets. Every activity he left behind him was so warm, so fragrant with his sanctified personality. Yet himself hidden behind the veil for ever! Many were the prayers, and the vows of unity which the assembled apostles made. But to what purpose now? By the middle of the day the sad intelligence spread through the streets of Calcutta, that the great Brahmo leader was no more. When the funeral procession was made up at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, hundreds had gathered in Lily Cottage. As it entered the streets on its way to the riverside at the place of cremation, the hundreds had multiplied into thousands. The cortege stopped once before the *Brahma Mandir*, and again before the *mandir* of the *Sadharan Brahmo Somaj*. From the roofs of the surrounding houses showers of flowers were strewn on the open stretcher with its stately burden, the sweet smiling face kept uncovered. The attendant crowds consisting of all castes and denominations, who spontaneously gathered without the least invitation, took up the cry of "জয় সচ্চিদানন্দ হরে" ("Glory to the God of truth, wisdom and joy!") An eye-witness describes the scene thus in the *New Dispensation* paper:—

"The procession moved on. The mourners, who were carriers of the body also, tired not, rested not, parted not, but moved on, as if impelled and kept up by a power from above. The crowds that were by, came to relieve these of their task, but could hardly get them to lose their hold of the sacred remains. As it passed Beadon Park (the frequent scene of Keshub's oratory), there was a wail of lamentation raised. Those who were in the garden said to those that knew not, and asked why the procession, that the Orator of the Beadon Park was being carried to his last place of rest. The women

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in the streets got into the thickest of the crowd to have a last look. The assembly was large; some thousands having now gathered. The Europeans and the Hindus were there, and the Mahomedans were there, all were there to pay their tribute of respect to the beloved leader of the Church of the New Dispensation. The burning ghat was at last reached. The sun was now going down the horizon, and the shades of night were descending. The gathering had reached its largest dimensions. There, in the evening twilight, as the earthly remains of Keshub Chandra Sen lay on their flowery bed beautiful, even in death, still more beautiful than in life if that were possible, the eyes parted, their lustre no longer visible, the hand resting upon the heart, the rest sheeted in white, covered with flowers, and the thick concourse intently gazing upon the face and the smile, the gathering behind pressing to come forward to have a look—the burning ghat witnessed a spectacle unsurpassed in dignity and impressiveness by anything within the memory of the living."

The funeral ceremony, or the cremation was thus performed. When the body was laid on the pyre, the officiating priest chanted the usual Sanskrit verse. The eldest son Karuna Chunder Sen then held a torch in his right hand, and solemnly applied it to the pyre saying:—"In the name of God, I apply this holy fire to the last remains of the deceased. The mortal shall burn away and perish, but the immortal shall live. O Lord! the departed soul is rejoicing with Thee in Thy blissful Abode." As the body began to burn, the mourners with one voice cried out:—"জয় সচ্চিদানন্দ হরে"

"Glory be unto the Redeemer *Who is Truth, Wisdom, and Joy;*" "ব্রহ্মকৃপাহি কেবলম্" "*God's Grace only availeth*" "শান্তিঃ. শান্তিঃ. শান্তিঃ।" Peace. Peace. Peace. The cremation of the body took five hours. At about 11-15 p.m. the ashes were collected in an urn, and brought to Lily Cottage by the chief mourners and the apostles of the New Dispensation.*

The funeral procession, and also the condolences that poured in from her exalted Majesty the Empress of India, down to the humble Brahmo sympathiser from the remotest corner of India, showed the universality and enthusiasm of honour in which Keshub Chunder Sen was held. Even his warmest and most devoted admirers were astounded at the unexpected testimony. All India throbbed with one pulsation

*The funeral rites as prescribed by Keshub in the *New Samhita* were first performed in his own funeral!

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of universal sorrow, in which the most conservative of races forgot their distinctions of caste, colour, religion, and training. It proved indeed that India was fast growing into a national life, and beginning to recognise its national heroes. Fifteen days afterwards the *Shradh* ceremony was performed amidst imposing and melancholy solemnities, and the ashes were deposited in their last resting-place in the open space in front of the New Sanctuary in Lily Cottage.

Everything is over now. They have beautified the ground into a garden of many-coloured leaves and flowers, in the middle of which stands Keshub's tomb. It is a modest obelisk of white marble surmounted by the symbolic device of the New Dispensation made of the cross, crescent, trident, and *Vedic Omkar*. The main building of the Sanctuary stands to the north, crowned by the flowers and foliage of the neighbourhood, the west is overlooked by the windows of Keshub's bed-room, the scene of his last agonies, the sacred spot where he breathed his last. They keep the room in the exact order as on the morning of his departure from this world. The whole place is romantic, beautiful, and sanctified. So let us trust it will remain for generations, yea for ever. At the foot of the marble pillar on a well-polished slab is inscribed Keshub's monogram with its three-fold motto of "Truth, Love, Holiness," while underneath is a beautiful quotation from his writings, thus:—"Long since has the little bird 'I' soared away from this sanctuary, I know not where, never to return again."—Fit place of pilgrimage this, for Theists of all lands and races!*

*Made into a Trust by Her Highness Maharani Sunity Devi C.I. (Keshub's eldest daughter) in 1927.

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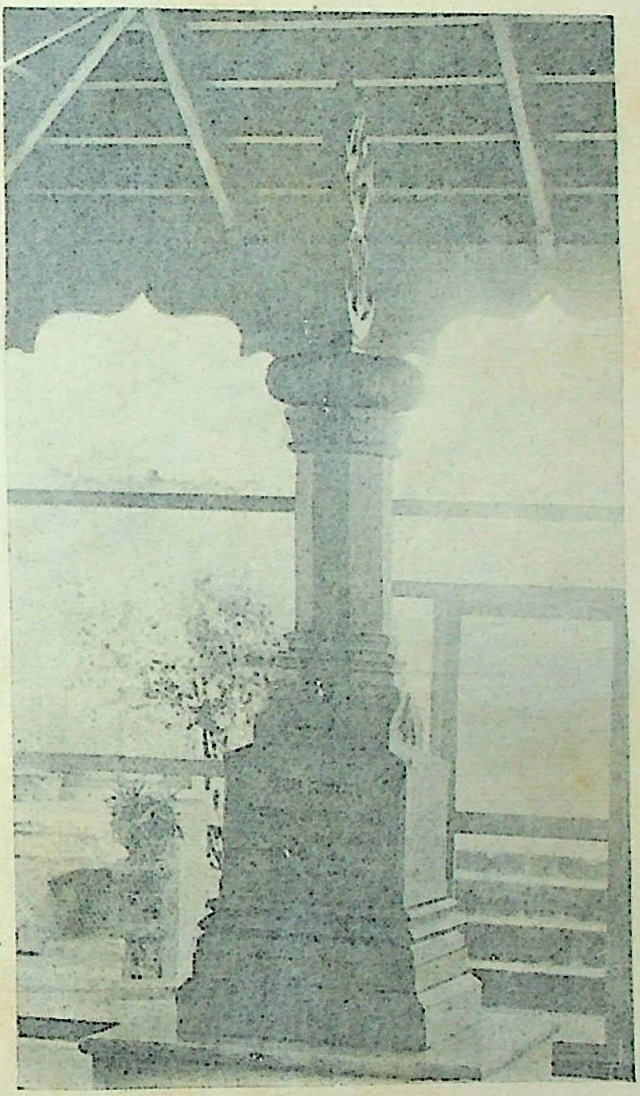

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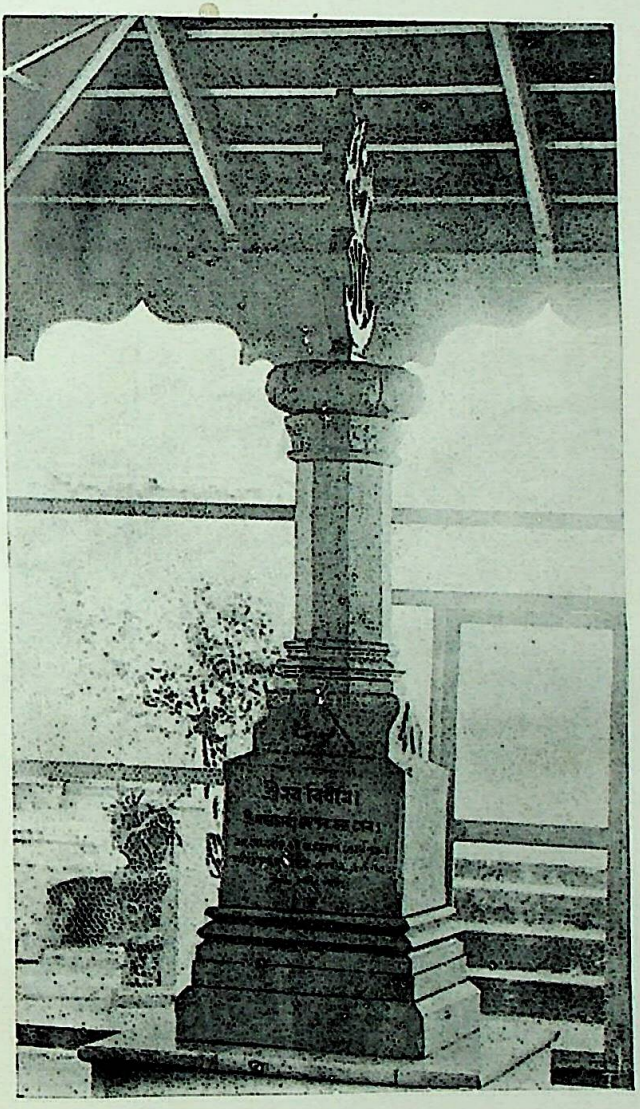

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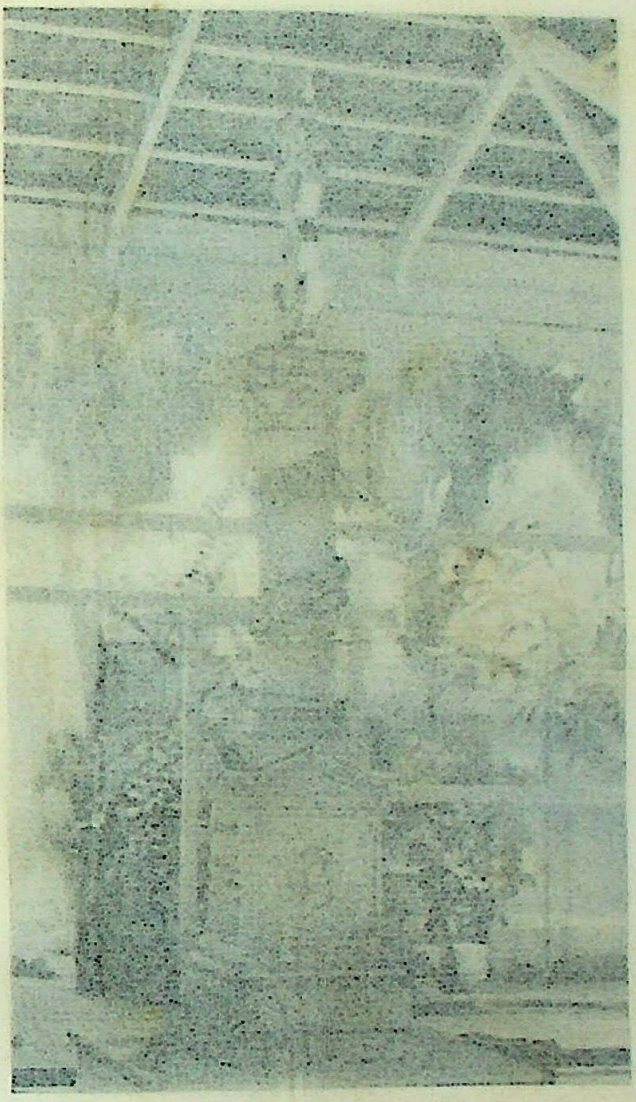

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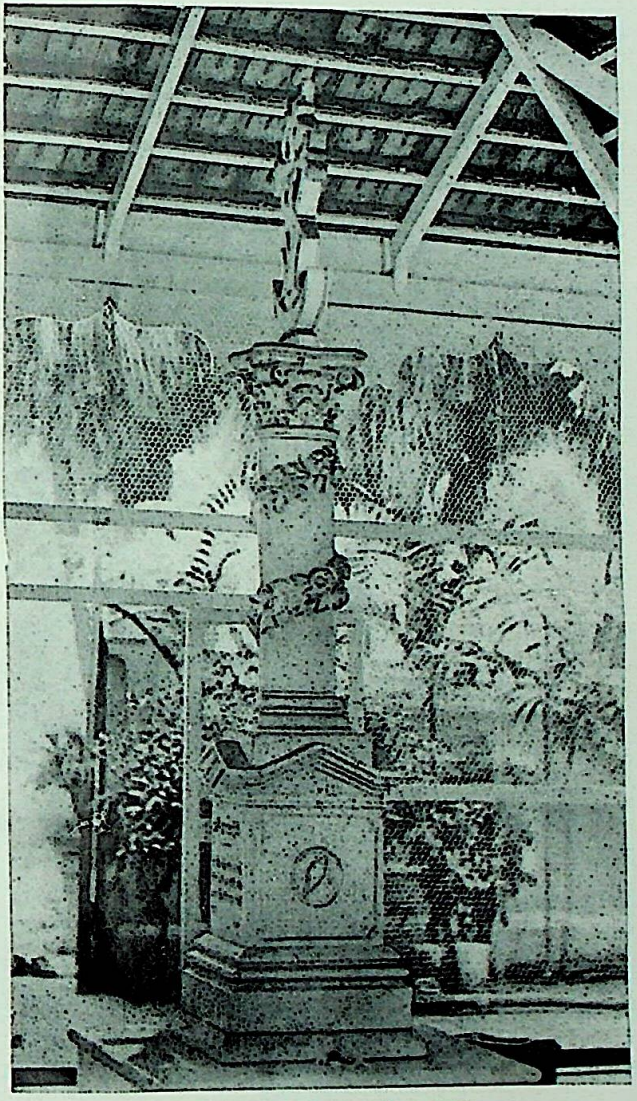

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APPENDIX A.

KESHUB'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.†

Extracts and Translations from Jeevan Veda (the Scriptures of Life).*

CHAPTER I. PRAYER.

THE first lesson from the scriptures of my life is Prayer. When no one helped me, when I did not enter the membership of any religious society, did not examine the merits of religious systems, or adopt any as my own; when I did not resort to the company of any believers or devotees; in that dawn of my spiritual life, the voice that sounded in my heart was "Pray!" "Pray!"...I never knew very well why or for what I should pray, that was not the time to reason. There was no one whom I could ask, nor did any one offer to advise me. It never occurred to me that I might be mistaken. I did pray. In laying the foundation of a house, who thinks of its future beauty?....."Offer prayer; thou shalt be saved; thy character shall be pure, what thou wantest thou shalt get;" this voice sounded from the east and west of my life, from the north and south. Prayer is man's guide, prayer is the endless helper. This one thing (prayer) I knew, I knew naught else. I had no spiritual friend. I looked up to the sky, but heard of no divine dispensation, no gospel of any known religion reached me. I never took thought whether I should repair to the Christian Church, to the Mahomedan *Musjid,* to the Hindu *Devalaya,* or the *Pagoda* of the Buddhists. From the first, I had recourse to that supplication before God which is greater than *Veda* or *Vedanta, Koran* or *Puran ;* to prayer I held fast. I am a man of faith ; I reflect and then I believe. But when I once put my faith in a thing, I am never shaken again...I offered one prayer

†"জীবন বেদ।"

*These translations give only the substance, not every sentence, of the fifteen sermons published as *Jeevan Veda.* They were all extemporary, and therefore somewhat prolix. They were published from notes taken at the time. P. C. M.

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in the morning and one in the evening, both of which I had written out. The day-dawn brightened into morning, the sun rose higher and higher. All that was hidden in darkness before began to clear up. Objects around were distinctly seen, and by the practice of prayer I gained an endless, resistless strength, the strength of a lion. Lo! I had not the same body, or the same mind. Great was the strength of my resolution. I shook my fists in the face of sin. I showed the terrible form of my determined will to doubt, unbelief, sin, and temptation. Every evil fled from me when I threatened to pray. I did not speak good *Bengali* at the time, so my prayers were not expressed in proper language. I could not contain my ideas. I sat near the window, and said a word or two with open eyes. Greatly was I rejoiced at that... Perhaps more than all other men present here I am in greater debt to prayer, because there was a time when I had no other help than prayer. I knew whoever prayed heard something. From the beginning, the doctrine of *Adesh* (inspiration) was involved in this. What religion should I adopt? Prayer answered that question. Should I leave all secular work and become a missionary? What relations should I keep with my wife? How far should I mix myself with money matters? Prayer answered all these questions. I did not then think much on the doctrine of inspiration, but I had the conviction that he that prays, gets a response, he that wants to see, beholds, and he that has a desire to hear, is given to hear. By prayer my intelligence was so cleared up that it seemed I had studied logic and philosophy, and difficult sciences for decades in some university. Gradually I joined the *Brahmo Somaj*, became a devotee, a missionary, a preceptor. Everything came in time. I have faith in prayer, and hence my life is what it is. Delusions on the subject of prayer ought to be removed from our community. He who prays but does not wait for an answer is a deceiver. He whose exterior and interior are not the same, who speaks overmuch, and cannot keep quiet his spirit, at the time of prayer, is a deceiver. The state of prayer is a difficult state. He who cannot remember in the afternoon what he prayed for in the morning, cannot remember on Tuesday what he prayed for on Sunday, is a deceiver. He who prays for wealth, or honour, or any worldly good,—any, even he who prays for more than nine parts of piety and less than one part for the world,— is a deceiver. Therefore, keep your prayers pure. Pray for heavenly things alone, and you will get everything else.

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CHAPTER II. SENSE OF SIN.

What is sin? What does a man to be sinful? I did not discuss these questions, and then come to the sense of sin. In looking about I felt what sin was in an instant, naturally I had the sense of sin. In the state I am speaking of, no man as teacher created in me the sense of sin. I was the strongest witness of my own sin. "I am a sinner, I am a sinner," my heart always said this; in the forenoon, in the afternoon, all the hours of the day, as long as I was awake, I had continually this sense of sin. In the dictionary of the world, theft, robbery and such other things are called sin. In my dictionary, sin means self-reproach, sin means disease, an unhealthy condition, a weakness; sin means the possibility of becoming sinful. I did not rest satisfied to know sin as sin; the possibility of committing sin was dreadful to me. When the light of conscience dawned on my heart, I beheld there hundreds and thousands of objects great and small, such as inertness, weakness, and passions of many kinds. All these lay so concealed that if the light of conscience were not kindled, they would remain unseen in the heart. So long as there is this material body, there is the root of lust and anger. When I say this I must also tell you I do not believe in the doctrine that man is born in sin. When there are carnal tendencies, there is the root of sin in them. I *may* commit sin. How? I may tell a lie. I may steal. If the sight of a man's wealth produces for an instant the thought that this wealth may pass from him to me, I am a thief. When life is seriously risked, I may become uncertain, and speak what is not true. Or if a direct untruth is not uttered, I may say something that leaves a wrong impression in the hearer's mind. Likewise, if I ever think myself greater than I really am, I am guilty of pride. If I love myself inwardly more than I love others, or seek my own happiness more than that of other men, I am guilty of the sin of selfishness. Thus I see different sizes of sin in myself, long and large, short and small, which like the worms of hell wriggle within my heart. If I count how many sins I have committed in these forty-four years, I may say without exaggeration I can count at least a million. The light of conscience is so strong in me that even the smallest sins are at once detected. The sense of sin causes me misery. It seems I am appointed to count these sins as if they were some one else's sins, so strong is the witness of my mind against them. From morning I

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count them all day. Now it is selfishness, then pride, then covetousness, afterwards the love of untruth, or the vain-gloriousness of wealth, so on, and so on. This reckoning is not by the intellect, but by the heart. It makes the heart burn. . . As in the spider's large net no sooner than the least fly falls, he hastens from afar to catch it, so if there is any such thing as the spiritual nervous system, as sooon as the least fly of sin falls within its meshes, it makes an instant perception. If in any region of life there is a bad thought, or a duty unfulfilled, some good deed undone, some virtue set at defiance, some weakness unremedied, the mind, ever awake, sees it at a glance. My conscience is very keen. Its power of cutting is terrible. If in pitying any man I trespass against the law of justice, I have no peace in the day or night. If I make a day's delay in paying the wages of my servant, conscience at once says "O! thou sinner, behavest thou so unjustly?" If I urge I will pay to-morrow not to-day, conscience again says "Ah, dost *thou* eat to-day? Thou art rich, and partakest of thy meals in comfort, but wilt not pay the wages of thy servant who is poor?" What more shall I say, there is no sin on earth which I cannot commit. For this reason I cannot believe easily any man to be holy. And for this reason no one can put me out of countenance by the accusation of sinfulness. How can you confound a man by charging him with sin, when he already counts fifty thousand sins in his heart?.....Behold such is the man whom you reverence. You do not see this, you do not think of this. So great is my misery, so great is my repentance.

But glory be unto God that from another point of view there are few men as happy as I myself. These worms of hell in me, these sins in my eye, ear, and tongue, what do they do? Much good. If I had no sense of sin, I should not come here. For if my hell is a present reality, my heaven is also a present reality. In the body that is long diseased, it is not easy to detect the seat of ill-health, but in a sound body every sign of disease is easily found. Because the instant I find a sin that instant also I feel the intense desire of prayer and *Yoga*. If I had been guilty of only ten sins, or ten sinful possibilities, when I got rid of those I should look upon myself as the greatest saint. But now conscience, by continually producing in me the sense of sin, opens to me the path of endless progress. Over and above this sense of sin, there is the sense of infidelity. "Is God here?" "Is Christ living?" "Shall I behold the

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face of Chaitanya?" O! thou sinner, doubtest thou all this? There is agony. Thus I run from city to city, till I reach the City of Peace, and the mansions of Joy. Unless a man has been sick, he cannot know the blessings of health. Unless a man has suffered poverty, he cannot know the happiness of prosperity. I have experienced sorrow, I have also experienced the blessedness of deliverance from sorrow. As the hand of the watch ticks every second, so there is in me a voice crying perpetually, "Thou hast gained very little, thou art nothing, thou hast advanced very little indeed." As the horse feels the lash of the whip, so this inner voice lashes me. Only the strange thing is that while I cry, I laugh also. The more I cry, the more I laugh. If taking medicine gives health, who will not take the medicine? . . . May our sense of sin increase. May we have the misery and the repentance that comes out of the sense of sin. Our Mother is so loving, that after every misery, there is reserved for us a corresponding joy. That very sense of guilt which produces pain is the cause of joy also. What is our sorrow when we know the God of *Yoga*, and the joy of communion? We have millions of sins, we have millions of remedies. We shall destroy millions of Satans. What is his fear who has devoted his life to the Mother? Where then is the strength of sin? O! friends, I have spoken to you of the darkness, I have also spoken to you of the light. If ye have sinned, let your souls become restless; and as ye grow restless, the God of peace shall come nigh unto you, and cause His rest to fill your hearts.

CHAPTER III. BAPTISM OF FIRE (ENTHUSIASM).

If I ask thee, O! self, in what creed wast thou baptised in early life? My soul answereth, it was the baptism of fire. I am a worshipper of the religion of fire. I am partial to the doctrine of enthusiasm. To me the state of being on fire is the state of salvation. What is this creed of fire? I see many lives have coldness in them and no fire, and many lives have fire and no coldness. The former are placid in their disposition, inactive, very composed in what they do. Their motions are slow, their words without warmth, in their hearts there is little enthusiasm. Even if they go to heaven they seek a cool place. If heavenly fire and water are placed before them, with great longing and love they take to the water. If this coldness be the prevailing senti-

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ment, it makes man's nature a spiritless thing, and relaxes its bonds. . . .All that is opposed to this kind of temperament is fire. In the life of the person who now speaks, from the beginning the fire of enthusiasm and energy has burnt. It does not show itself as a temporary heroism, it does not come and go. In the dictionary of religion it is defined that heat means life; the reverse of heat means death. When the physician observes there is no more warmth in a man's body, it is all cold, he will decide that life is extinct. It is the same in religious life. For this reason from early life I have been an advocate of fire. My heart palpitates as soon as I perceive any coldness in myself. It may take time to know whether I am a sinner or not, but it does not take time to know whether I am dead or alive. I at once decide this by feeling whether I am cold or warm. I live in the midst of fire, I embrace and exalt fire . . .Wherever I find warmth, I find hope, happiness, courage. If I find the fire is losing its heat, I feel the man is going presently to drown himself. Therefore to me a cold state is a state of unholiness. Hell and coldness have been always identical to me. Around my heart, and around my society I have always kept burning the fire of enthusiasm. When I have served one body of men, I have longed for other bodies of men whom I serve. When I have compiled truths from one set of scriptures, lest these truths might grow old, I have eagerly sought to gather other truths from other scriptures also. This keeps up the condition of heat. I have always run after what is new, always wished for new acquirements, new joys, new ideas. What is new is warm, what is old is always cold. I have seen numbers of men who were very zealous at one time, who never committed any grave sin, but who at last drowned themselves in cold water. In dying they spread this cold water, and killed others also. Therefore when I have discovered any oldness or coldness, whenever I have found my duties growing old, or my prayers growing cold, I have cried unto God, "O! Thou Merciful save Thy child from this danger." And thus I began my preparations for the *Homa* (Fire Baptism) ceremony, began to pour *Ghee* on fire, till I found God was the fiery Deity, and in calling upon Him, I found fire floated up on river and ocean, fire blazed upon the mountains, fire lay in the human body, and new truths flashed from all sides. Am I only a sinner when I speak falsehoods? No. If my prayer becomes lifeless; if men lose their courage or zeal when they hear what

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I say, then also I am grievously sinful. I have not come to pour cold poison upon the earth; he that does not keep up his heat may suffer death any day. I know that believers have calmness also. But whether it be a fault or virtue in me, I have been at all times fond of warmth. It is difficult for me to be inactive, it is impossible for me to hide myself somewhere away from the community. From head to foot I am full of fire. In this way have I served, laboured, and practised religion. Those who are cold are often cowardly, they run away after working five or ten years. Watch, therefore, whether or not there be still fire and force in you. If the desire of making fresh efforts fails you, if there is no joy in fresh activity, no enthusiasm when you join together to sing *Sankirtan* (Choral music) send for the physician, know you are on the point of death. Let not your mouths ever utter the cold words of despair. Let there be so much fire in you that as soon as you are touched, your fingers may send forth fire into mine. Let the man of eighty have such warmth that every word he speaks may fire thousands. Thus for ever keep the fire of energy and enthusiasm in your hearts.

Chapter IV. Habitation in the Wilderness (Asceticism).

When I entered the world, it was as if I entered the graveyard. God had appointed that the garden of pleasure should be to me like the abode of death. The skilful heavenly Artist, Who drew the portrait of my life, first painted arouud it a background of deep, intense black. In the midst of this black He brought out a relief of brilliant colouring. So it has ever been. The black and the bright, side by side, enhance the beauty of the picture. In sorrow, anxiety, asceticism my religious life began. In my eigheteenth year religion first dawned, but when I was fourteen I left eating meat. Who taught me that meat was forbidden? One Guide I knew, Him I honoured, and I called Him Conscience. That conscience spoke to the boy, and the boy made his renunciation. Asceticism began in my fourteenth year. And as I grew in religion, I began to pray, gained in moral enthusiasm and received God's grace; the cloud which was no bigger than a finger on my life's sky grew exceedingly dark, so dark, that it overcast my face, saddened my heart, and at last I had neither peace by day nor by night. All the pleasures which youth enjoys, I shunned as poison. To amusement I said "thou art Satan, thou art sin." To desire I said "thou art hell, those who touch thee fall into the

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jaws of death." To my body I said "thou art the road to perdition. I will rule thee, or thou wilt lead me to death." I did not then know religion, I knew that to be worldly was sinful, to be fond of one's wife was sinful. The world looked to me like a poisoned chalice, handsome without, dreadful within. The smiling face became morose. I took farewell of all laughter. Friends saw this, but did not understand. My mind said "if you laugh, you will be a sinner." All those books, and all those friends who were likely to make me smile, I avoided. Gradually, I became silent, and spoke very little. The place in which I lived, and the room where I sat, I regarded as a charnel house. The noise which the inmates made was to me like the howl of wild beasts; and every scene of wickedness was like the play-ground of death. True, I did not retire into any wilderness, but the world was a wilderness to me. I did not weep, but lived on without a smile. Thus I rose from bed in the morning, and thus I retired to bed at night. Who was my chief friend then? He among the English poets who could best describe this melancholy. I used to read Young's "Night Thoughts." If any book gave me pleasure, it was that book. I occupied myself with those things which put a painful pressure on the mind, keep it away from evil, and make it serious. All this took place when I was about 18, 19, or 20. I had married. My wife was coming to live with me. I was about to enter the world. Here was the prospect of danger. I thought thus:—My soul is a noble thing. Shall I subject it to a wife? Shall I subject it to the world? I resolved never to be over-fond of wife, or of the world, because I knew that to be the cause of death to many. . . .Thus the foundation of my life was laid in asceticism. What is necessary for an ascetic life I have got. The gods and the titans have fought in me, the gods have gained the victory. Conscience and asceticism, like two brothers, have governed my life, and the world has never been able to come near me. And at last that which was the cause of fear before, has become friendly. The graveyard in which I first built my house, has now flowered and fructified into a beautiful garden, through the middle of which is the road to God. No one can now make out where the graveyard lay. The beginning was in sorrow, the end is in joy. I cannot be counted among such fortunate persons as begin their religious life in smiles. How many calamities have passed over my head! Unless thou turnest thyself

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into a corpse, divine life shall not enter into thee—this was the law God applied to my case. I sowed my seeds in tears, I reap my harvest in laughter. This cannot be the law for every one. Each man must follow the law applicable in his own case. But there is one lesson in my life which may apply to all men. Every great truth, great deed, great deliverance is accompanied by throes of childbirth. You shall have to die once, if you should want to live ever afterwards. If you want to be regenerate and twice-born, once for all you must retire into the wilderness. That asceticism which brings joy I hail. I never desire forced, false asceticism, those austerities which naturally come, I take up, and they always bring forth good. When black clouds form, we know it will rain. When asceticism presents itself in life, I also look for a similar scientific fact. When a new dispensation is about to come, a new spiritual reality is at hand, or a new discipline is to be revealed, then asceticism appears and possesses the mind. Forsake that asceticism which makes a display of itself before men. Conceal asceticism within thy heart, and in external things be like other men. If there is any hypocrisy in this, born ascetics like me encourage it. By the commandment of God, to propagate my religion, I live in civilised society, but my mind is born in the generation of ascetics. Value asceticism for the sake of spirituality, it has done much good in the *Brahmo Somaj*.

Chapter V. Independence.

Subjection poisons the world, it is the cause of heaps of unholy trouble. I cannot say why from the beginning I was disgusted with dependence. Men try to govern their anger, their lustfulness, and all their other passions, but few make violent efforts to escape from the evil of subjection. Why God implanted in me such deep hatred of this evil, I could not determine. I did not calculate the effects of this feeling, only I had the sense that all subjection was sin, and enmity unto God. Therefore, up to this day I have never bent my head before any man. I have had to suffer much for this, but have never forsaken my vow. I have ever clung to that liberty which is as unchangeable as the rocks. I know it is not easy to be true to this resolution. There was deep meaning in this resolution. Out of the sense of independence, the New Dispensation was to be born, all sorts of prejudice and ignorance were to die, and the glory of truth to shine. Independence was my primeval motto. I will not

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fall at the feet of any man, never sell myself to my superiors, never be a slave to any book, and never perpetually sing the praise of any particular sect. As on one hand I resolved not to do all this, so on the other I resolved never to submit to self-will, or to pride, never to be untrue to the vows which I took in the presence of God. While this independence grew in me, I saw idolatry and caste reigning on all sides, and directly I determined to cut away their bonds. When I saw men enslaved by their desires and passions, I could never rest quiet. My weapons were kept always sharp to cut away the slavery. Some say "submit to thy preceptor"—my mind becomes sorely afraid at that. My mind is equally afraid to submit to parents, or to friends with whom religion has united me. My greatest friends saw I loved them, but was not fettered by undue fondness. I would never do even what is good when men tell me. But what I would never do by man's word, I would eagerly do at the word of God. Until I hear the voice of God, I will never begin any undertaking. This kind of determination may be dangerous to other men, but I am fortunate it never did me any harm. My independence, however, is not the self-will based upon pride which is to be bought in the market of worldliness. I did not seek independence to exalt my self, or to attain a high place among men. I loved independence, but was not enslaved by it. If I subjected myself to men, hundreds would have joined my party to-day. If I subjected men to me by any false fascination, my party to-day would have been crowded. But I have made independence the captain of my band. Therefore, I call those who are with me my friends, I never call myself their *Guru* or master. Liberty shall triumph. Truth shall triumph! When Independence calls men, if any want to come let them come. I will never set myself up as a guide unto others. Let there be no *Guruism*. I abhor subjection; And what I hate in myself, do I not hate in others? I cannot bear to see any one, even the least in my church, depend upon another, and it is exceedingly unbearable to me to see any one depending upon myself. Do you remember I have ever been a slave to anybody, then why should you be slaves? If he, who has never been a slave himself should try to make another his slave, or feel happy at another's slavery, is he not a sinner and a hypocrite? If I fail to create any community, if I fail to draw any man to my side, better than that I should enslave a man's soul. I am not a *Guru*, I have never tried to enslave men. I have always been, and I am still a learner.

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If there are fifty men in my party, they are of fifty different kinds. Truth is my witness, the sun and the moon are my witnesses, if there be a hundred men present here, each of them is his own chief. Every one will have to acknowledge this now, every one will have to acknowledge it when I am gone. I have wished to grind no man in my mill, but wanted to see every one free. I have taught no one to call man his *Guru*, or his governor, but look upon God as the only Guide. I have given glory to the most revered Jesus. I have abundantly loved Chaitanya. But I have never made them the ideals of my life. If you want to charge me with vanity, you can do so. But I have never made man, and never shall make man the model of my life. No man can be the supreme model to man. Where Christ's light does not reach, God's light reacheth. There is no book which contains all wisdom, therefore I have made no book my standard of religion. Who loves the sons of God more than I do? Yet I will never dishonour God by making them the ideals of my life. I love the tiger-skin (a carpet during devotions), I love the *Ektara*, but if I become too fond of them, they will become divine to me. Therefore I use them to-day, renounce them to-morrow. In the New Dispensation there is perfect liberty for every man. Who is the preceptor, what is the *Brahmo Somaj*, where is my party among *Brahmos*? I am attached to nothing, to nobody. I care only for the substance. If it be necessary I can renounce every kind of name, but the substance I cannot renounce. Therefore, there is no agreement between me and anybody. May God bless me and my brethren that there may be perfect independence amongst us. By that only will our numbers increase. By that you shall be what you ought to be. Put away on one side all sins and superstitions, and on the other side put away all self-will, vanity, and pride, then hurl your weapon of independence against both. Our dependence is upon the Lord, and therefore we are entirely free.

Chapter VI. The Voice of God (Conscience).

If there be a voice speaking from inside the heart, men usually call it a ghost. He, that is possessed by a ghost, hears voices within and outside himself. From the dawn of religious life I have heard such voices, both inside and outside. Yet I never have taken them to be ghosts. This is another peculiarity of my life. In many instances have I

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found there is a person within the person, there is a tongue within the tongue, and they talk in different voices, and the voices can be distinguished by the ear. Men talk, reflect, judge, and then learn religious truths. I have often confessed I came not to the path of religion by this process. But within the "I," there is a "Thou," separate from myself. That called out to me; That I perceive; and by His word I want to practise religion. That there is this Some One speaking within the heart is a truth of repeated experience. I know there are people who did not hear this voice. And it is also said that this kind of hearing gives rise to superstition, it does harm, it is supernaturalism, and those who believe it are madmen. If this be madness, I wish to be counted among the mad; it is the madness of faith, it is the lunacy of salvation, because I do not call it the voice of a ghost, but the Voice of God. I can never disbelieve this voice. Whenever I heard this speech of the invisible, living Person, I instantly made out it was not the speaking of friends or relatives, nor my own voice, not a truth learnt in some book, nor a memory of the past, nor a picture painted by imagination. It is God Who commands me to leave some sin or practise some virtue, to undertake some new duty or travel into some new country. The intellect has often exercised itself, taken many means, but failed to silence this voice. A man may feel his own greatness, feel that he knows, acts, and what he does will be remembered by all. But a man also feels that though he by his own intelligence has done much, there are certain things, certain actions which do not belong to him, but to Another Who speaks from within. As I myself have a mind and certain sentiments, so too He has. I have my conclusions, He has His. The one is the creature soul, the other is the Supreme Soul. The two are separate. To the same substantive Soul, the two adjectives "Creature" and "Supreme" are applied. The creature speaks within the soul, the Supreme also speaks within the soul. It requires a disciplined ear to distinguish the two. All that is good belongs to God, all that is bad is mine. This thought constantly practised clears the difference between self and God. Give the glory to God, take all the shame to thyself. Some realise this distinction naturally. To those who realise it by nature, the voice of God is most constantly audible. Like a thunder-clap the voice of God shakes their whole being; where faith is strong, there the tones of both persons can be heard, there all good results

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follow. It is clearly distinguished this is mine, this is His. My own tastes tell me to drink wine, to enjoy the pleasures of flesh; the other voice tells me follow God's ways whether they lead to ragged garments or renunciation of every thing. My own judgment complains that asceticism enjoins painful diet; but the Higher Judgment decides that my intellect shall not be my guide. "When I command, the path of darkness is best for thee, and thou shalt have to walk it even though there be a hundred emissaries of death." In the life of this humble man, such experiences have happened. When my own mind has apprehended poverty, ill-health, insult, calumny, within my heart I have heard "Fear not!" Putting my faith in these inward whispers I said "Whether I live or die, Lord to Thy feet I will cling." Thus have I repeatedly forsaken friends and relatives, and encountered serious troubles. The more I have advanced in *Yoga*, the more I have studied the science of mind and penetrated into myself, the more I have perceived that the mansion of man's nature is two-storied, the creature below, the Supreme above. On the tree of life there are two birds, one is the creature soul, the Other is the Supreme Soul.* If I cut the organ of speech in man, I see two parts in it; one utters the *Vedas* and *Vedantas*, the other utters the counsels of death. The carnal tongue speaketh vanities; the spiritual tongue speaketh forth the glories of God. Try and you shall hear the sweet speech of the Spirit. I wish to be a great man by learning, wealth, and religious accomplishments. But there is one inside my heart before whom I am only a servant, a bondsman. Before that ocean I am only a little pond; before that vast sun I am only a poor oil lamp; before that great palace, I am only a small hut. This voice I heard in the day, I heard it in the night. It grows every day more and more solemn within me. I was in great trouble. I wanted to go to the right, it turned me to the left. I cried out for light, it cried out for darkness. I was obliged either to recognise it as the word of God, or the counsel of seven hundred devils would torment me, and make me despair of future happiness. Never mistake the word of God to be your own device. Because some men have been misled by following this path of divine command,

*"এক শাখী পরে, দু বিহগ বরে,
সুখে বসবাস করে রে।"

ব্রহ্মসঙ্গীত।

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that is no reason why I should leave it. People may argue that "whenever you have certain desires and evil passions, you may claim sancton for them from the voice of God, and thus walk defiantly in the ways of vice." Because some men have been deceivers I cannot leave the path of virtue. During these twenty years how many times have I heard, and how many things I have heard, but I have never been deceived. I see the creature soul, and the Supreme Soul mixed in the same cup. I never believe that He is in the skies, and I am cast away on the earth. I see a Hand within my hand, a Tongue within my tongue, a Breath of life within me. When I listen in faith, and feel the tongue moving, I watch whether both the tongues move. If the sinful tongue moves alone, I want to cut it away—O! Tongue of God speak Thou! I repudiate the opinion of those who call this mere fancy. There is no uncertainty here; if there were I should not utter it from this holy pulpit. Are the creature and God then one? No. The two tribunals are always open and separate. The decisions of the one are often reversed in the other. I am therefore a dualist. I see two judges, one my own soul, the Other Who guides my soul. When I speak, my meaning is spiritually uttered, and not by the tongue. So when He speaks His utterances are spiritual, not through the fleshy tongue. The words of the soul are not like the sounds of the wires of brass or iron, not like the song of the bird, or the murmur of the brook; yet they are exceedingly soft and wonderful. That ear can distinguish them to whom God has given the power. May I have increasing faith in the word of God, and may you, too, have faith in it unto your salvation.

Chapter VII. The Beginnings of *Bhakti*, or the Love of God.

O! reader, the scriptures of my life are the scriptures of hope. Because I did not bring with me into the world everything I possess. When you hear the account of the truths I have acquired by spiritual effort and experience, your hearts cannot fail to be inspired with hope. In this life, there has been a side of weakness and darkness of which when you know, those amongst you who are despairing shall gain courage thereby. There was no love of God in this life of mine at first, nay, there was little love or passion of any kind. I had faith, I had conscience, I had asceticism, and with these I descended into the scene of action. These gifts are most

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valuable, they are excellent, to men in certain conditions they are most rare, but all these three are dry. Into a life that began with such a drought, how did the waters of *Bhakti* enter? There was no hope of this, nor even did the necessity of such a thing occur to my mind at first. I had the contentment of conscience, not the joy of love. I had no hope of entering into the company of joyful worshippers. Though some friends gave me the title of *Brahmananda** (Rejoicer in God) my heart did not respond to it, I did not think I was worthy of this title. In the midst of my austere ideas I continually said to myself "renounce this, renounce that, mortify thy senses, put forth thy enegry, preach unidolatrous monotheism." But the nectar of peace, the nectar of the love of God I had not tasted. I looked up to the *Father,* but the inner mansions of the *Mother* had never been opened to me, and no one had told me the way to them. There was no poetry in my heart in those days. The supremacy of conscience was the prevailing characteristic of *Brahmos* of that time. One man's character was reproduced in the character of many; and at first five, then ten, then fifty, then a hundred youths were fired with the same ambition. There was no *Khole,* no *Sankirtan.* That which was not within me, was not suggested to me from without. Within and without there was harsh obedience to conscience and to faith. The sands of the desert seemed to fly on every side. How long could I go on like this? I felt it was not right. And as soon as the least sentiment of *Bhakti* showed itself in my heart, someone from within brought me before the altar of the God of love. There was a change ; I perceived, what I had not before, I was beginning to have. And now so great is my love, that I cannot say whether in me conscience is stronger or *Bhakti,* whether I have greater joy, or asceticism. I feel now that love has become my nature. Some philosophers say that what did not exist in nature before cannot be acquired afterwards. He who has no emotion or no faith in his constitution can never attain it by culture. But in my case, I can say I began religion with fear and trembling, but am now immersed in joy. First hardness, afterwards tenderness, the Father first, the Mother afterwards. At first the name of God was only one name, into how many hundred names has it now been transformed. If the impracticable has become practicable in the case of one man, why should it not

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be in the cases of many? Into how many forms of beauty is the Mother's nature manifested to me; how many beautiful sentiments are still coming? These are the days of fresh acquirement. What we had not, we have now; what we had, we have got in greater abundance; and what we have not now, we are sure to get in time.

CHAPTER VIII. SHAME AND FEAR.

For a long time, this life has been the slave of shame and fear. As other propensities, so also shame and fear have tyrannised over me, and even now the tyranny is not over. I have not willingly acknowledged these masters. Of good and devout men, fear and shame are enemies. As other bondages have to be severed, so their bonds, too, ought to be cut away. But whether it be for want of spiritual culture, or for natural weakness, the shame and fear of men are still in me. Even if I try, I cannot get rid of them. At every step I meet them, I feel I am in their power. Shame and fear have no doubt their province. God has removed them in my case from the province of religious life, but allowed them to remain in my worldly life. As spiritual power grew in me, as conscience became strong, faith increased, and prayers and devotions gave me greater love of God, I felt there was no religious denomination of whom I need be afraid. In the very morning of my life I felt man was a vanity. Shame and fear decreased in my character as piety grew. But I repeat this was in my religious life, not in my worldly life. Where I do not hear the voice of God, the commandment of duty, there my two ancient enemies draw me into their power. When in this state, the whole aspect of my face changes, and I am afraid and ashamed to mix with men. This same head that is lifted up in courage to magnify the name of the Lord, is brought down in the presence of very ordinary men. Perhaps I was sent to the world with a natural weakness and shyness of disposition. Every time I am thus afraid and ashamed I become miserable. Whom do I fear? Even coolies in the street, even men whom you call mean and ignorant. But when I see the learned, my heart fails me altogether in their company, and say "thou art not fit to enter the *Durbar* of the wise." Naturally I keep behind. When I see the rich, or men honoured for their rank, I have the same kind of feeling. Three kinds of men I cannot easily approach, the rich, the famous, and the learned. Duty says, go; therefore, I go. Duty further commands me to speak in public, therefore I speak. Where I do not hear that commandment, and

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begin to reflect, my hands and feet lose their girmness, and my eyes close of themselves. If I try to speak I fear I will make mistakes in grammar. The thought comes into my mind "O! when will this meeting end, when shall I go back to my old familiar company, to my humble friends!" Then I reflect thus, why these are but men, I am also a man. Even if I make mistakes, will they not forgive me? Will they insult me, kill me, shove me out by the neck? That is not likely. The learned may say you have read nothing, you are not fit for learned society, you may give religious precepts, but where men of erudition meet each other, what right have you to be there? Not that I have never been in such assemblies nor that I have been there very rarely. I have gone many times, and many times have I been treated with respect. But my fear is that so long this might have been out of chance, out of mistake, it may not be so again. I fear to sit alone even in my own house. I cannot think of travelling unattended, wherever I have gone to do anything, I have gone with others. My mind says that a man of my nature ought never to be alone. Is a God-fearing man ever afraid? But I feel all this fear in the vacant ground of the world, here there are wild animals, many enemies ready to attack me, therefore like little children I am afraid. I see men coming to visit me. I feel inclined to run away. I cannot say "how do you do," I cannot look them in the face. If they do not speak first, my alarm becomes all the greater. If great men of the world happen to come, I think whether I cannot make a timely retreat, I fail even to welcome my own brethren. I am judged therefore to be a vain man, conceited on account of my religiousness; many hard things are said of me. My own judgment says I am wrong. But I cannot wash this nature of mine out of its weaknesses. I have at last concluded that in the religious world I am to be always on the bosom of God, and in the secular world under the protection of some guardian or friend. I have constantly felt the need of a faithful friend who will always speak for me in the world. Thus, on one side there is so much fear and shame. But on the side of religion, I roar like a lion. There I fear no man, and never shall. When my religion demands it I am devoid of shame, I can stand up and dance, a thing I could never do before, if I tried for ten years together. Let men call me vulgar, if they will, I am prepared for that. On the roadside, and on the riverside, time and again I have repeatedly done things in utter defiance of shame. Here, fear and shame have I cut

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to pieces. When I have to preach unpopular truths, I forget all fear and shame, I will utter them before great men and *Rajas*. Why then am I afraid and ashamed elsewhere? I cannot say. A lion at one place, lamb at another. At times and places dreadful shame and fear; at times and places dreadful fearlessness and shamelessness.

CHAPTER IX. THE BEGINNINGS OF *Yoga*, OR COMMUNION.

As *Bhakti*, the love of God, has been with me an acquired virtue, so also *Yoga*, union with the Spirit of God. In the early days of my religious life, I did not know what *Yoga* was, never heard its name, and never thought I should have to cultivate it. The subject of *Yoga* had not then arisen in the *Brahmo Somaj*, and the duty of practising it could not be traced in any book written at that time. Years passed away in the pursuit of truth, in the discipline of asceticism, and by the grace of God at last *Bhakti* presented itself in my heart. This *Bhakti* was in course of time turned into inebriation in God's love. As the love of God grew in me, I felt however that to make it permanent it was necessary to have *Yoga*. The intense excitement of devotional feeling may last for a little while, but to secure the permanence of such feeling it was necessary to have contemplative union with the Divine Spirit. If you have faith in God, you must be one with Him. The heart should be the lover of God, the eye should behold the Spirit of God in everything. *Bhakti* and *Yoga* thus both presented themselves in my view, and I felt the desire of cultivating them. When the lights and colors of the love of God were first seen, hundreds were illumined thereby, my brethren and friends took up the *Khole*, shed tears of devotion, and were full of devotional spirit. They heard enough of *Bhakti*. But *Yoga* did not grow so easily. Its doctrines are difficult, its practice is difficult, it is altogether difficult for any one to understand it. And if any one should acquire this rare gift, it is difficult to communicate it to others. *Bhakti* soon spreads from one to many, but if there are in all five men in a country who have practised *Yoga*, it is enough. When I felt its want in my life, I felt that faith, love, asceticism were all in vain, if I did not acquire union with God. I was not led to it by the precept of any man. As the grace of God descended to me in the shape of *Bhakti*, so some wind that blew from some other direction brought to me *Yoga*. When I got both I could distinguish the one as

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Bhakti, and the other as *Yoga*. The one sweetened my spiritual union with God, the other turned my devotions into reverence and awe. The one is my sister, the other my brother. The one served to establish my love of God on the ground of faith, the other served to shed the waters of sweetness on my spiritual union. Otherwise, perhaps *Yoga* would have led me to pantheism, and *Bhakti* begotten superstitions. But now I planted the garden of God's love on the mountains of spiritual union. That garden is not made of dreams and imaginations, because it is built on the hard rock. The two unions made a grand union, and it produced its natural effects. I judged myself very fortunate in this, because in our country men by cultivating hard spiritual communion have often fallen into the dreadful vortex of pantheism, and excited by the impulses of devotional feeling have become superstitious. But in the present case, the one cleared my power of vision, and the other made my heart overflow. In woods, in waters, in fruits, in flowers, in wind, in fire, I saw the great Substance God. And He Whom as Substance I behold in everything, I realise as the exceedingly Beautiful One. He Whose beginning is in Reality, has His end in Beauty. The union of these two has saved me from much sin and error. Where I at first saw only wood or earth, I now see not only that but much more. I pursued my culture with open eyes, and beheld that concentrated in everything there lived the essence of God. What is *Yoga*? Such intimate union with the indwelling Spirit of God that the instant any object is perceived, God is perceived in it. The sky is no longer the mere sky, but the expanse of Intelligence spreads through it, shinning in its brilliant unity everywhere, one Force presenting its hard solid front in all things. Like a blazing fire I behold God on all sides, like a blowing storm I feel Him pressing upon my flesh and blood. I felt the Spirit to be near, I went still nearer, I touched the Spirit, I became one with the Spirit, thus my *Yoga* became deeper and deeper. There are degrees in such union, it may be for an instant, for an hour, or as often as I want. Without any guide, without any precept, I continued my efforts. At first I saw Him as a flash of lightning, then as always glimmering in the heart. Now, whenever I desire I can behold Him. As you strike the flint and the spark flies out, so any instant, the fire of God's presence may be struck out of my body; my tongue, my hands, fingers all give out the same sparks. Many times have I tried this experiment, and

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invariably my God has successfully come out of the trial. Is such union possible without love? Loving union is a sweet union. I have practised it, I am immersed in it, I have sung to it with the accompaniment of the *Ektara ;* and in the joint music one note is *Bhakti,* and the other is *Yoga.* At first it was dry, if I shut my eyes I saw darkness. Now as soon as I call upon God, He reveals Himself. Now I may doubt whether I exist or not, but my faith in God cannot be doubted. The Spirit of God and my own self are now woven together. The two objects have united into one, and the one cannot be denied without denying the other. Such is the gospel of hope I have to preach.

CHAPTER X. THE WONDERFUL ARITHMETIC (FAITH).

The arithmetic which guides the world I have never accepted, it is opposed to the very rudiments of what I believe. I have my own arithmetic of which I well understand the principles, and can explain to devotees. These principles are very exact, though men will not accept them. The whole century will pass, yet they will not be accepted. The manners and customs of the country from which I come do not agree with those you see here. As the people of the country here are partial to their customs, so the people of my country are partial to ours. Who does not wish to glorify his own land? O ! mankind, if you have improved the laws and usages of your country, and want to explain the same to others, give me the right of doing the same in regard to my country zealously. Because our laws are not inferior, but superior to yours. Nay, admit at least, that they ought to be heard and discussed for awhile. Wonderful is our arthmetic, though men imagine they see a great deal of untruth in it, and regard those who practise it as fools and mad men. But still my mouth shall not stop, but declare the wonder of my calculations. According to our opinion if you take three out of five, the remainder is seventeen. And if a man will practise religion in accordance with the spirit and rules of this arithmetic, he is never a loser, but always a gainer. It is by such practice alone that I have been able to plant the banner of victory before numerous enemies. Whenever I have said five and three make eight I have lost; but whenever I have said that if you deduct much out of little, a very large quantity remains, there I have triumphed. I felt a building had to be raised, immediately it arose, the walls were built up high, the pictures were hung,

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and the foundations were laid last of all. Such is the law and usage of our land. Those who lay the foundations first, and then begin to build, we call them foolish, and know they will never succeed. If I find any one saying "how can we build a temple, until funds are provided," I at once decide this man will never build anything. When we want a house we say "O! Lord we would build a house unto Thee." Immediately the house rises four stories high, and as it rises, money pours in. Be not anxious before you commence an undertaking, be not anxious after it has commenced. Never have any anxiety either in the beginning, middle, or end, but do God's work by God's commandment alone. A child has to be given in marriage, five hundred or five thousand rupees are wanted. The fool of this world is troubled as to how he will procure the money. Reflections, and calculations, and discussions come and go, his whole head is sick with the thought, years pass, and still there is no sign of the marriage. Men of our country under the same circumstance look heavenwards, and ask "O! Lord, is this daughter of Thine to be married?" "Yes. The date is fixed on the 5th of September." The devotee at once begins to work at it with the implements of conscience and asceticism. In due season the marriage takes place, and there is no hitch whatsoever. There was no man to marry her to, there was no money; both the man and the money came, and the believer of God has satisfactorily done his duty. Men of the world ask how can all this be? But God says it is so, and so it shall be. And the devotee feels when the Lord hath said so, it shall be. But how, by what means, who will tell? Heaven knows, earth does not. Again, when it is seen that many will praise a certain course of conduct, I feel instantly this is what ought not to be done. Why should I do that which learned men praise, great men admire, and common men exalt? My mind dictates another course of conduct. Looking heavenwards, I perceive it is right. But if it is taken up, the rich and learned will call me a fool. Every one will speak ill of me, I will be insulted, men will not come to hear my speeches, even dear friends will desert me, both mind and body will become enfeebled. Whenever I feel all this, I immediately decide this is just the thing which must be done. Because, that which attracts the enmity of the world, attracts the friendliness of God. Where the world says a thousand men are necessary, the devotees of God say five men will do, but if you get twelve, the utmost number has been reached. What twelve

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can do, a hundred thousand cannot do. If you get thirteen in the place of twelve, they will spoil it all. Therefore I try to have a few men, it is against God's will to have too many. A few men always form the pillar on which is borne the Kingdom of God. The invincible twelve have been victorious on earth. When the Minister sees many coming, he pitches the key of his spiritual tune so high that only the few can join it. When he finds too many around him, he introduces most difficult discipline, they are disgusted, some of them spread bad reports against him, and many go away. The five hundred are cut and clipped, till the whole force of spirituality is concentrated in five men of the inner circle. Let me give you the assurance that by taking too much thought you cannot preserve your body, and much less your soul. Establish your religion where the mountain chasm yawns under your feet, and where you may slip in any moment. You wish to do the works of charity when there are *lakhs* of rupees at your feet? Nay, nay. Rend your cloth, and hold a thread out of that to give unto God's work, and before the next day dawns He will give you all you want. God's wealth belongs to His eldest son, and what is the eldest's is the youngest's also. I have nothing; I am wealthy in possessing God alone.

Chapter XI. The Achievement of Victory. (Success.)

When I opened my shop in the pleasant market of God, my rule was never to take or give anything on credit. As my means and resources, so my sales and purchases, everything in cash. I have never wavered from this principle. I did not enter into the commerce of religion by another man's advice, and what was not mine, I never claimed as mine. The little I possessed, whether of love, or faith, or knowledge, I transacted upon, and never meddled with anything beyond that. Thus have I carried on my trade, thus secured many customers, by this principle alone has my business prospered. I never took thought as to what the scriptures taught, or what men taught, I always felt that if I tasted things by other men's tongue, I should get into trouble. From the first, my resolution was first to understand things, and then to do things. Whether it be asceticism or *Yoga*, whatever it was, I should take nothing at another man's word. I had eyes, ears, hands; I should prove everything and then decide. The Mother was in my home, my Guide was always at hand. I will ask Him, and He will explain everything. What stores

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I had that I traded in; if I should want more, God would provide. Thus I would increase, and thus afterwards I would turn wealthy. Now, I find I have traded well, and God has given me plenty and prosperity. I wanted to trade in cash, not because I had infidelity or avarice, but because in the bright dawn of religion, God had promised to make ready payment for everything. Hence my faith is that whatsoever thing is needful, let a man, so far as he can, work hard to acquire it, the Father will surely give him the rest. Thus has my practice of religion always been. I have been a gainer by not waiting in expectation of future gain. I had patience but for the night, next morning I got all I wanted. Thus I see whatever I have prayed for, either in regard to myself or my country, or the world or mankind, has been given me. I have heard what men say of delays, and impossibilities, of triumph in a better world, of achievements in the future, and I have found plenty of ground for such faith. But what it took other men to wait for very long, so that their body and mind were wasted in waiting night and day, we have obtained by our ordinary strength, and ordinary effort. Large-hearted prophets and seers, after much suffering and labour in the cause of truth, failed in the commerce of this world, and departed for the next. A thousand years after they sowed their seeds, the harvest was reaped. But times are favorable to us. Strong love changes circumstances. We, now, see that the labour of twenty-five years produces the work of five hundred years. It takes, now, only an hour to do what used to be done in twenty-four. What did we see twenty-five years before, what do we see now? What disputes were there between one religion and another; what fatal tendencies had men to impiety; what want of love to God; what want of enthusiasm in the weak character of the *Bengali*? After a few years' work the prospects of spreading and perpetuating truth are much greater. In that land where most good deeds crumble into dust, behold the religion of the *Brahmo Somaj* is transformed into the *New Dispensation*. There has not been a year without progress, not a month or a week when the Spirit of God has been asleep. Formerly, men had heard but little of the good news of heaven. To-day the gospel roars as a lion. Not only Bengal, but all India trembles as if in an earthquake; what is there in relation to the New Dispensation which has not found fulfilment? Great deeds have been done. And now, looking up to the Sun of Truth, holding in my hand the fire of realities, I declare that what

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I had to gain, I have gained ; what I had to see, I have seen. Now, nothing can daunt me, nothing can wound me. Whatever accounts I look into, I find I began with five rupees and gained five lakhs. My handful of dust has been turned into a handful of gold. In this country, not long ago drunkenness was becoming fearfully prevalent, and now men are inebriated with the *Bhakti* taught by Chaitanya. The floods of doubt, unbelief, and atheism were coming, and now men and women exlaim "We have attained Him, He is in our hearts?" The temple of the *Vaishnava* and the temple of the *Shakta* are now united into the great temple of God. Distinctions of caste and various superstitions were in the land. How often have I wept tears of bitterness over all such evil! But at every drop of tear a *Bigha* of land has borne fruit, not by my merit, but by the grace of God. I see good on every side. I came into the world to be triumphant, in my old age youth seems to come back to me again. It kindles my eyes, and sets my enthusiasm once more ablaze. I have been pained, persecuted, and trodden under foot, but I could never feel I had lost anything. Glory be unto my God!

CHAPTER XII. SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS.

The mind divides into parts an entire object, and again unites the broken parts into a whole. In spiritual things also, this process of division and union goes on. As in the material world, objects are reduced to atoms, and the atoms again are reunited into objects, so in the religious world, analysis and synthesis take place. In certain minds the analytical faculty predominates; in other minds the synthetical faculty is stronger. Some men, by the power of thought, always resolve a subject into its constituents, study an idea in its many parts, and examine a thing in each of its qualities. Some again do not wish to enter into all this analysis, but behold objects in their entirety. In my mind there is an effort to reconcile these two tendencies. It cannot be said I arrived at this reconciliation all at once, for I, too, in the beginning, like all men, took a partial view of things, and understood a subject in one particular relation, unconnected with others. For instance, my one great care at first was how to get rid of certain sins. Then for some time, my care was that I might be of service to my fellowmen. At one time I was fond of study, at another time I grew weary of learning. Now I practised asceticism, at another time love, at another time

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holiness. Among the attributes of God, I learnt at first to perceive the attribute Justice. Reflecting upon Justice, my mind was strongly stirred by the feeling of Repentance. Then, after a long time I learnt to behold His Mercy, and instead of Repentance there was Love in my heart. I had not the desire of reconciling all the attributes together, and took up only that which was of use to me at the time. The faculty of analysis was strong in me, I had no love for the undivided; I could not comprehend the undivided. I was like a sick man; from the great dispensary before me I took only that medicine which suited my case, but did not grasp the whole scene of beauty before me.* I had terrible wants, and each want demanded its particular satisfaction. So I acquired that which I most needed. But though my nature thus acted prosaically, I observed there was enough poetry in it too. I found it was nature's design to make the acquisition of one thing after another, and then in due time to gather all the acquirements into a great whole. All good things were thus strung together in a beautiful garland by an unseen hand. I had no desire for this at first, but the New Dispensation did it for me afterwards. Who knew before that Jesus should be honored? When I found that Chaitanya was necessary I went to Nuddea, brought him, and installed him in my heart. When Buddha became necessary, I took him from under the great *Bodhi* tree, and gave him a place in my life. I never knew at first that the three should be united, and thus a communication of saints, a band of devotees was to be constructed. I can never rest contented with one idea, this is a peculiar trait in me. Justice I took hold of to cure my sin; but if I confined myself to it, I felt my religion might become exclusive, and immediately, therefore, I took to the contemplation of love. This brings much joy, and I am in a laughing mood continually. Then again I felt I must not run too fast in the way of sentiment, and took to the contemplation of justice again. When I found too much study made me unduly intellectual, I took to the simplicity of the child. Thus to keep the balance of my soul has been my effort at all times. As in regard to myself, so in regard to others. Whenever I see the *Brahmo* public too intent on outward work and labour, I try to direct its course towards spiritual matters, till in a little while I see the man of much work has become contemplative, and turning his back to outward things

*In India, public dispensaries are very grandly furnished.

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is enjoying the deep delight of communion with God. Though I have spent my days thus, yet my progress has always been towards harmony. I have now left all exclusive religion for the ideal of synthetic perfection. The great Jesus said, "Be perfect as God." From a long time I have inscribed this precept in letters of gold. God's qualities are perfect, every attribute, justice, or mercy, or wisdom, showing its own fulness. Not so in me. In trying to be ascetic I cease to be joyful, in trying to be joyful I cease to be strict. I see God in water more than in land; I see Him more in the holy man than in the sinner. I see the God of Christ, not the God of Buddha, my intellect accepts one idea, and expels another. This partial view came from secret sin, and I have outgrown it. The New Dispensation cannot foster such exclusiveness. If I love one devotee, all devotees come in; if I see one part of God, all parts fill in. I have bound all things now in a great nosegay, which I call the New Dispensation.

CHAPTER XIII. THE THREEFOLD SENTIMENT (CHILD, MADMAN, INEBRIATE.)

The nature of the devotee is not composed of a single metal, it is a compound of different metals. Reflecting on my own life, I discover in it three metals. Not that I began life by wilfully combining these three, but when after the lapse of many years I looked into myself, I came to the conclusion my character had more than one element in it, and by further examination I determined the nature of the elements. There are three natures united in me, three persons, the one a child, the second a madman, and the third an inebriate. In this union I have gained wonderful wisdom, holiness, and salvation. Nature is incomplete if any one of the three is left out, as if God has declared that unless the three materials are mixed in a man, he will be neither happy nor good. The more a man seeks God, the more childlike he becomes; the more he communes with God, the more like a madman he becomes; and the more he tastes of Heaven, the more of an inebriate he becomes. In the first stage of religious life there is comparatively little of these three qualities, but as he becomes more and more mature they increase. The nature of the child is that he dislikes the old, loves the company of children, loves play. I have always loved the company of the child-like. The nature of the old man loses energy, zeal, activity. When I see I am growing in simplicity, in candor,

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wanting to speak out my mind, and hating the deceit and double dealing of the aged, I know I am child-like. The scriptures of my life prove that with growing years, the child-nature grows in me. According to the erroneous arithmetic of the world I am obliged to say my age increases, but according to the calculations of our own country, I feel I am becoming younger and younger. If you feel it impossible to believe this, at least believe I am not growing older. When watching for the day-dawn, as the clock strikes four, how much difference does it make in your calculation if it is only three or four minutes later? Is it not still day-dawn? What then are thirty or forty years before the infinite years of eternity? If a child is eighteen months old, will four days more make much difference in its age? In the place where I have to work for millions of years I am still a child. I have just come to the world, and have no time to think of death. A year or a century is like a second. If a man die at eighty, you say he died very old; in our country, we say behold the departure of an infant of two summers; you say he runs, we say he creeps. A man is not old when his body fades, childhood means the freshness of mind. The mind's heaven is the real heaven, may God preserve that. When I go into the next world, I shall enter into a new school, and learn new lessons of God's love. With this material of childhood there is the material of lunacy. The philosophy of the lunatic is different from that of the world at which he laughs. He does not count the gain or loss of the world, he rushes on to a hundred losses. Men think themselves rich when they get thousands, the lunatic thinks himself rich when he has nothing. I count myself very fortunate if I find anything in me which I can laugh at. The more I forget the world like a madman, the happier I am. I fear to tread in the path where the prudent of the world go; if any business takes me there, I try to leave it soon. I always want to go where devotees, like madmen, sing and dance in the excitement of God's name. When I can pray like a madman, study like a madman, then I am happy. The third element in me is that of the inebriate. There is such a thing as the passion for drinking wine. In such nature as mine there is the same passion. The inebriate always increases his dose, so do I. Formely, my devotions took five minutes; now they take five hours. Formerly, I was content to call upon God only once, now I call many times, and am still not satisfied. Any kind of wine did for me before, now I want strong hot wine, such

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as was drunk by Jesus and Chaitanya. I pray to God with folded hands; this is one kind of prayer; but the prayer of Jesus, Moses, or Chaitanya was of another kind. When I think of all this, I lose every sense of the world. I was satisfied before if I could preach to six hundred men, now my nature demands more than six thousand. Nay, I wait for the day when the whole East and West shall become maddened and inebriated by the love of God. I have within me, and honor the man who has these three elements.

Chapter XIV. The Recognition of Caste.

If men are divided into two classes, the rich and the poor, among which of these should I be included? O! my soul, what is thy caste? Art thou the child of the rich man, or the poor man? I want to know my own nature. Like which of these two castes are my tastes and desires, the company of what sort of men do I like, and whose ways do I love to follow? After a minute self-examination of the last twenty-five years, I have concluded that I belong to the caste of the poor. In my daily habits and actions, very large symptoms of poverty are seen. I do not say this out of mere supposition, that would be speaking falsehood from the holy pulpit. I have observed the traits of my nature very deeply, and I can, with truth for my witness, declare I am among the poor-spirited. Though born high, though beset with various signs of wealth, yet the feelings of my mind do not correspond to them. I have wealth, but no heart in it; there is plenty of delicate food around me, but I have no delight in it. My mind is pleased with very simple things. If I see two companies of men, one rich, the other poor, my nature likes to consort with the poor, and finds pleasure in them. All this determines my caste without chance of mistake. Though, however, my heart be meek, the circumstances around me are those of the rich. It is easy to examine myself in this state of contrast. If instead of being born in a palace I was born in a hovel, the examination would be more difficult, because then my poverty might become enforced, and secretly in the mind there might lurk the fever of the desire of wealth. When, however, my outward condition is that of the rich, it ought to be decided whether my heart is satisfied with that condition, whether, high-placed as it is, it seeks poverty. Very humble food gives me contentment. It is not a difficult thing for me to practise poverty, my nature takes delight in

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rice and herbs. I have a passion for such things. Whether others are pleased or not at this, to me it is a source of wonderful joy. If I have to travel by railroad, I generally go third class. I fear to travel first class, lest I should trespass into the domain of the rich. My mind says there is luxury but anxiety too in the first class, there is rest and ease in the third. Thus I decide I am made for the poor, not for the rich. Where the poor are, there is rest for me, there is life for me. I never learnt this poverty by effort, it came to me naturally. Who taught me that when I was to walk in procession, singing through the city streets the name of God, I should go bare-footed like a poor man? Did I for one moment take thought what civilised society should say at this, that the newspapers would ridicule me? I knew it would be called degrading and still I did it. I could give many more instances. Whether the world understands it or not, there is no doubt in my own mind that my nature belongs to the caste of the poor, my body is the poor man's body. True, I sometimes sit with the rich, I shake hands with great men, but does that change my mind? If the *Chandala* touches the hands of the *Brahman*, does he become a *Brahman*? If the eater of herbs is feasted once in his life in the house of an emperor, does he become a rich man? My nature never changes, and therefore I can safely mix with everyone. I also know and determine by secret signs who have the badge of my caste. But one thing I must say what I always find in my scriptures. Though I always keep the company of poor ragged men, and they are my dearest friends, yet I honour the rich. The notion generally is to hate the rich, and give honour to the poor; it is said salvation is not for the rich, where there is prosperity and rank no virtue can abide; religion dwells only in the hovel. But the New Dispensation teaches us to honour the rich and honour the poor, they both go forward to the gates of heaven. Love both impartially, there is no harm whether a man be outwardly rich, when he is poor in spirit. God, the source of all virtue, dwells in palace and cottage alike. I have asked my Father why He sent me to a wealthy family, and beset me with every manner of prosperity; why I was sent for education to the College of the wealthy, and in early age kept the company of rich, high-born, young men? He placed me in the midst of wealth and luxury, but concentrated all poverty in my heart. Gifted with this double condition I learnt to love the rich and poor alike. I have spread one arm

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towards the rich to draw them into the New Dispensation; I have spread the other arm towards the poor to embrace the humble, indigent wayfarers of life. The learned and the rich sit on one side of me; the poor and the unlearned sit on the other side.

CHAPTER XV. DISCIPLESHIP.

The world is the seminary of God. So long as we are to be here, we shall have to acquire piety and the knowledge of God. Therefore I have never looked upon myself as a teacher, and never shall. I came as a learner, I am still learning, and for ever shall remain a disciple. The leading idea of the *Sikh* religion, that of discipleship, is flowing in my blood, and gives vigour to my life. The mornings and evenings teach me, I read from the scriptures of prosperity and adversity. Every object is my teacher, every animal is my teacher, and I have learnt a great deal from human nature. Whenever I open my eyes I see a school, and when I shut my eyes I see a grander school. My desire to learn is great, the objects to teach me are boundless. Various facts preach loving wisdom. I have never found myself in want of books, and I cannot believe there will ever be a cessation of my study. To learn is my trade, my life, my happiness, my salvation. The sky is my preceptor, so is the bird, so is the fish. I have acknowledged my discipleship to all things; my nature is well adapted to this. The discoverer of America was not more happy in finding out a new world, than I am when I find a new truth of religion or morality. My process of learning is not by the exercise of my intellect, not by the comparative study of many books, but as the lightning flashes across darkness, so truth flashes across my mind. While, perhaps I am engaged in a duty, or looking at an object, it seems as if some one brings me suddenly the message of a new truth, it enters into me with a shock, and causes my whole mind to shake. The truths that thus come I compare with the truths that I had before, and find them entirely new; the joyful Mother is constantly revealing new truths in the firmament of my soul, and this makes me exceedingly happy. As it satisfies my intellect on the one hand, so it beautifies my life with holiness on the other. Content with the acquirement of the world's knowledge, passing the appointed number of examinations, have I set myself up as a professor of sacred learning? It has never yet

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come to my mind that I have learnt all I want from the Great Teacher. When I began my lectures in the Brahmo School I never thought so, and seated as I am now on the honored pulpit of the *Brahma Mandir,* I do not think so. The joy of teaching is not half so great as the joy of learning, because when we learn a new truth, we possess a new world. When a professor of music by repeated practice is able at last to compose a new combination of sounds, when a fisherman by casting his net brings up a fish unseen and unknown before, when a painter strikes out a new combination of colours, or is able to give expression to a new ideal, when an astronomer discovers a new planet in the mid-night sky, how unspeakable is their joy! The throne of an emperor, the wealth of a nation is not comparable to that. Joy thrills with electric currents through one end of their body to another. And equally great is the joy of the learner when he learns a new truth. But when truth enters into a mind, it must also find its way out. Those who come from our country have two doors to their houses, one for the import, the other for the export of wisdom. It finds its way in, and then goes out for the good of the world again, returning with fourfold profit into the mind of the learner. It increases when stored up in the heart, it increases still more when spent for the good of mankind. All my eager desire is to acquire truth, I take no thought how I shall preach it. Whenever I have to preach, truth rushes out by its own force. The profession of the teacher or *Guru* is vain. I never took it, and never shall take it. I do not teach this year what I taught in the last year, I do not offer the same prayer to-day that I did yesterday; nor do I repeat the same lecture over and over. My reservoirs are never dry. I never deal in silt and mud. As God has been merciful to me in other things, so in this. I have never been in want of what to say, or write, or think. I have never wished to reproduce yesterday as to-day, enact old history as new, and chew the cud of the past. My tongue sticks to the palate when I think I am teaching people, but I rejoice when I remember I am still learning. For me to learn is to teach; when I acquire a truth, hundreds also acquire it; when it is proclaimed to me, it shall be proclaimed everywhere with great sounding instruments. What I learn, India also learns, because I am always intently looking for the good of my land. As if some bird carries abroad my truth in its beak. My heart is connected by secret channels with the hearts of my brethren,

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and everything good in my heart flows on into theirs. Whoever be the man that brings any new message to the world, even if a common street singer and mendicant, I sit at his feet and learn. There is no good man who comes near me without pouring some new truth into my heart. God has implanted in me a force by which I can draw in the good qualities of every one. I have been a learner and disciple all my life.

CHAPTER XVI. RECTIFICATION OF UNTRUTH.

This chapter has been added in the new edition of *Jeevan Veda* (1926), Sixth Edition, to which the reader is referred.

APPENDIX B.

IMPORTANT EVENTS.

Important events in the Life of Keshub Chunder Sen arranged chronologically :—

Acharya Keshub Chunder Sen—

— Born (5 *Agrahayan*, 1760 B.E.)	19 Nov., 1838.
— Married Jaganmohini Devee	1856.
— Established the Goodwill Fraternity ...	1857.
— Joined the Calcutta *Brahmo Samaj* (1779 B.E.)	1857.
— Left the Hindu College	1858.
— Started the Calcutta Brahmo School ...	1859.
— Sailed for Ceylon with Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore	1859.
— Widow Marriage Drama enacted	1859.
— Published his first tract "Young Bengal, This is for you"	1860.
— Started the *Sangat Sabha*	1860.
— First Social Service organised	1861.
— First Mission Tour undertaken, *Krishnagar*	May, 1861.
— First Brahmo Marriage	July 26, 1861.
— Started a Fortnightly—*The Indian Mirror* ...	1 Aug., 1861.
— Ordained *Acharya* (Minister) by Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore	12 April, 1862.
— First step taken towards spiritual emancipation of women	13 April, 1862.
— First Inter-caste Marriage celebrated ...	Aug., 1862.
— Expelled from family, illness and return home	Dec., 1862.
— Started *Brahmo Bandhu Sabha*	1863.

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Acharya Organised all-India Mission tour (Bombay, Madras, etc.)	9 Feb., 1864.
— Solemnised Inter-caste Widow Re-marriage ...	Aug., 1864.
— Started the *Dharmatattwa*	Oct., 1864.
— Established *Pratinidhi Sabha*	30 Oct., 1864.
— Differed with Maharshi Devendra Nath ...	1864—1866.
— Established *Brahmica Samaj*	1865.
— Mission tour in East Bengal	1865.
— Wrote and published "True Faith" ...	1865.
— Led the band of progressive religious thinkers and workers who left the Calcutta *Brahmo Samaj*	1866.
— Lectured on "Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia"	5 May, 1866.
— Lectured on "Great Men"	28 Sept., 1866.
— Established the Brahmo Samaj of India ...	Nov., 1866.
— Led the beginning of *Bhakti* Movement ...	1867.
— Presented (along with others) an address to Maharshi Devendra Nath	1867.
— Started Daily Prayers : *Suddhamapapabiddham* in *Aradhana Swarupas*	1867.
— Celebrated the First *Brahmotsava* ...	24 Nov., 1867.
— Lectured on "Regenerating Faith" ...	24 Jan., 1868.
— Laid the foundation stone—*Bharatbarshiya Brahma Mandir*	24 Jan., 1868.
— Started the first *Nagar Kirtan*	24 Jan., 1868.
— At Monghyr (Growth in *Bhakti*—Devotional fervour)	1868.
— Started Weekly Services—*Colootola, Jaistha* ...	1868.
— Published "A Voice from the Himalayas" (in Simla)	1868.
— Consecrated *Bharatbarshiya Brahma Mandir* ...	23 Jan., 1869.
— Opened the *Bharatbarshiya Brahma Mandir* : Instituted Sunday Weekly Service ...	22 Aug., 1869.
— Sailed for England	15 Feb., 1870.
— Landed at Marseillas	19 March, 1870.
— Arrived at London	21 March, 1870.
— Preached in the London Church of Dr. Martineau	10 April, 1870.
— Welcomed publicly (London)	12 April, 1870.
— Spoke before the Peace Society	17 May, 1870.
— Lectured on "England's Duties to India" ...	24 May, 1870.
— Interviewed Queen Victoria	13 Aug., 1870.
— At the London Farewell Meeting	12 Sept., 1870.
— Sailed for India	17 Sept., 1870.
— Established the Indian Reform Association ...	2 Nov., 1870.
— Started the first Bengali Pice paper (weekly) *Sulava Samachar*	Nov., 1870.
— Started the Ladies' Normal and Adult School	1 Feb., 1871.
— Opened the Workingmen's Institution ...	1871.
— Published the Brahmo Pocket Diary for 1872 ...	1871.
— Opened the *Bharat Ashram*	5 Feb., 1872.
— Marriage Act (III of 1872)	19 Mar., 1872.
— Established the Missionary Conference ...	5 Aug., 1872.
— Delivered the Town Hall Lecture on Inspiration	25 Jan., 1873.
— Started the *Sunday Mirror*	29 June, 1873.

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Acharya Delivered the Town Hall Lecture "Behold the Light of Heaven in India" ...	23 Jan., 1875.
— Delivered the Town Hall Lecture on "Our Faith and Experiences"	22 Jan., 1876.
— Albert Institute Established	22 April, 1876.
— Consecrated *"Sadhan Kanan"*	20 May, 1876.
— First Band of Hope Started	1876.
— Delivered the Town Hall Lecture on "Philosophy and Madness in Religion" ...	3 March, 1877.
— Removed to Lily Cottage	12 Nov., 1877.
— Arranged the betrothal of his eldest daughter Sunity Devi with Maharaja Nripendra Narayan Bhup of Cooch-Behar ...	6 March, 1878.
— Delivered the Town Hall Lecture on "Am I an Inspired Prophet?"	Jan., 1879.
— Delivered the Lecture "India Asks: who is Christ?"	9 April, 1879.
— Established the *Arya Nari Samaj*	9 May, 1879.
— Delivered the Town Hall Lecture "God-Vision in the Nineteenth Century"	24 Jan., 1880.
— Proclaimed the *Navavidhan* (12 Magh, 1801 *Sak*)	25 Jan., 1880.
— Established the Order of *Sadhaks* ...	Jan., 1880.
— Introduced the first Pilgrimage to Saints ...	23 Feb., 1880.
— Established the Tract Society	April, 1880.
— Delivered the Town Hall Lecture "We, Apostles of the New Dispensation"	Jan. 22, 1881.
— Instituted the Vow of poverty	15 March, 1881.
— Established the Order of Divinity Students ...	22 March, 1881.
— Established the Order of *Grihastha Sadhak* (Ascetic Householder)	3 April, 1881.
— Established the Order of Sisterhood ...	3 April, 1881.
— Observed the New *Homa* Ceremony ...	7 June, 1881.
— Observed the New Baptismal Ceremony ...	7 June, 1881.
— Started the *Liberal*	Jan., 1882.
— Published the *Nava Samhita*	1883.
— Published *"Yoga*—Objective and Subjective"	1883.
— Consecrated the New Sanctuary	1 Jan., 1884.
— Passed away at Lily Cottage	8 Jan., 1884.

(Nababidhan Pocket Diary).

APPENDIX C.

MINISTER K. C. SEN'S LITERARY WORKS.

Yoga (Subjective and Objective).

Lectures in India, Part I and II.

Lectures in England.

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True Faith.
The Missionary Expedition 1879.
A Brief Reminiscence.
The New Samhita (In English).
Prayers—A complete record of all the Prayer's, arranged in chronological order. Part I, II.
Essays: Theological and Ethical.
Discourses and Writings—Part I.
The New Dispensation—The Religion of Harmony—Vol. I & Vol. II. Arranged in chronological order.
Navavidhan Diary.

(England, Ceylon, Madras, Bombay) Diary Tracts.

ব্রহ্মগীতোপনিষৎ, ব্রাহ্মিকাদিগের প্রতি উপদেশ। কতকগুলি ধর্ম্মোপদেশ, ব্রাহ্মধর্ম্মের মত সার, কতকগুলি ধর্ম্মকথা, কতকগুলি প্রশ্নোত্তর, স্ত্রীর প্রতি উপদেশ, সুখী পরিবার।

প্রচারকগণের সভার নির্দ্ধারণ

দৈনিক প্রার্থনা—(কমলকুটীর) ১ম হইতে ৮ম খণ্ড

হিমালয়ের প্রার্থনা ১ম খণ্ড

হিমালয়ের প্রার্থনা ২য় ও ৩য় খণ্ড

মাঘোৎসব

সাধুসমাগম ও (পরিশিষ্ট)

সেবকের নিবেদন ১ম ও ২য় খণ্ড ৩য় খণ্ড ৪র্থ খণ্ড ৫ম খণ্ড

দৈনিক প্রার্থনা ১ম ও ২য় খণ্ড (ভারতাশ্রম)

আচার্য্যের উপদেশ ১ম খণ্ড—১০ম খণ্ড

দৈনিক উপাসনা, সঙ্গত—(সঙ্গত সভার আলোচনা) জীবনবেদ, প্রার্থনা—(ব্রহ্মমন্দির), পরিচারিকাব্রত, অধিবেশন—(ভারতবর্ষীয় ব্রাহ্মসমাজের অধিবেশনের কার্য্যবিবরণ), উপাসনাপ্রণালী, নবসংহিতা

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শ্রদ্ধাস্পদ প্রতাপচন্দ্র মজুমদার কৃত—

Life and Teachings of Keshub Chunder Sen (New, illustrated Edition		Rs. 3.
		মূল্য
উপদেশ	১ম খণ্ড	।০ চারি আনা
,,	২য় খণ্ড	।৵০ ছয় আনা
,,	৩য় খণ্ড	।০ চারি আনা
Life of Protap Chunder Mozoomdar— Vols. I—II (Bound together)		Rs. 2
By Suresh Ch. Bose		
শ্রদ্ধাস্পদ বিনয়েন্দ্রনাথ সেন কৃত—		
Intellectual Ideal		Re. 1
Lectures & Essays	Vol. I (Literary)	Rs. 1-8
Do	Vol. II (Theological)	Re. 1
Do	Vol. III (Sermons)	As. 12
আরতি		৸০ আনা
Life of Benoyendra Nath Sen— (In English)		Rs. 3
By Surendra Nath Dutt :		
মহাত্মা বিনয়েন্দ্রনাথ সেনের জীবনী—		২৲ টাকা
শ্রীযুক্ত দেবেন্দ্রনাথ বসু প্রণীত :		
ডাক্তার শ্রীসত্যেন্দ্রনাথ সেন কৃত—		
নববৃন্দাবন প্রতিষ্ঠা মণ্ডলী গঠন তীর্থযাত্রা		।০ আনা
স্বর্গগত কান্তিচন্দ্র মিত্রের শ্রাদ্ধানুষ্ঠান জননী মঙ্গলা দেবী		৵০ আনা

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PRESS CRITICISMS.

LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF KESHUB CHUNDER SEN.

By P. C. Mozoomdar.

The Englishman:—"This is not only the best biography ever written in English by an Indian, but it is probably the best life of Keshub Chunder Sen that will ever be published. The late reformer was as unlike the generality of men as that totally different man, Dr. Pusey. In order, therefore, to write his life properly, the biographer required to know the man intimately, to be throughly in sympathy with him, and to have a vivacity of literary style adequate to conveying his conceptions to other men's minds. Mr. Mozoomdar possesses these qualifications. He and Keshub were fellow-villagers, as well as life-long companions, so that we have a graphic picture of the reformer's boyhood and school-days, that essentially valuable but most difficult things to obtain about a great man. As a piece of work this memoir deserves high praise. It is simply and correctly written, with a happy command of language. The various dissensions in which Keshub was involved after he became a public leader are described with more than a friend's impartiality, and admirable taste is displayed in avoiding the least reference to the state of things in the New Dispensation after death took away its minister.* * Wisely, kindly, and cleverly he has sketched the life, work, and character of one of whom we wrote at his death that "no Hindu ever made his name so widely known beyond his own country, or drew the attention of the public so closely in his own day to the details of his career."—Sept. 22nd, 1887.

The Indian Daily News:—"This exhaustive and interesting work, which covers over five hundred pages of well-printed matter, speaks favourably for the ability and perseverance of its author, and forms a standing monument of no mean value to the memory and merits of the illustrious person whose life and feelings, whose thoughts, words, and sentiments are recorded within its pages. One almost feels inclined to regard Mr. Mozoomdar as a sort of "Brahmo Somaj" Boswell, or Pepys, in a different style, so deeply, so carefully has he entered into details concerning his beloved master Keshub Chunder Sen's life. Mr. Mozoomdar's work is one that will fully repay the reader, since it is most interesting from beginning to end."—Nov. 5th, 1887.

The Statesman:—"Mr. P. C. Mozoomdar's narrative of the life and teachings of his spiritual guide and friend, the illustrious Keshub Chunder Sen, is executed in a style worthy of its object. The book is certainly one of the most interesting and fairly written biographies that the present century, fruitful in literature of this class, has produced, and it will be widely read and valued by all who are interested in the work of the great Indian Reformer."—October 21st, 1887.

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The Bengalee :—"It is a biography, full, copious and sympathetic, and as such it is one of the most interesting books we have read. The writer exerts a spell over the reader throughout his work. Here and there are perhaps traces of a friendly partiality and of that sympathy which, as it is the inevitable condition of true insight, occasionally serves to warp the judgment of the biographer; but the reader is fascinated by the remarkable story which is told and in so attractive a manner. Mr. Mozoomdar was the playmate of Keshub Chunder Sen in his earliest years and was his friend and disciple in later life. None knew Keshub Chunder Sen so well. None knew him better in all his strength and in all his weakness; and we rise from a perusal of his book with the conviction more deep-seated than ever that the subject of the memoir was a wonderful man, a man of commanding genius, of extraordinary eloquence, and of fervid piety. The hero is worthy of such a biography, and the biographer has paid the most abiding tribute to the memory of his friend and teacher. The book is written by a *Bengalee*, a stranger to the English tongue, but it affords fresh proof of the wonderful command which some of our countrymen have acquired over the language of their rulers. The book is a remarkable performance, and we cordially recommend it to our readers."—October 29th, 1887.

The Epiphany :—"Mr. Mozoomdar is to be congratulated on the completion of a most valuable and interesting work. Not even the severest critic, we venture to think, will complain that Mr. Mozoomdar has not done his work well. The literary merits of the book are considerable, and friend and enthusiastic admirer of Keshub as the anthor is, he has nevertheless honestly carried out his purpose of being "a faithful recorder," and has not, as is too often the case with enthusiastic biographers, slurred over those passages in the life of his hero which at the time excited the most adverse criticism from his opponents. Mr. Mozoomdar has therefore given us not only a vivid portrait of the minister of the *Church of the New Dispensation*, but he has made a most valuable contribution to the history of our times."

The Hindu Patriot :—"Babu P. C. Mozoomdar's work is worthy of his great subject. He has given a true sketch of the life and work of the late Brahmo leader. Every page of the book bears evidence of the author's deep admiration and affection for Keshub Chunder Sen, who was not only his spiritual leader but also a near relation; but we have not been able to detect a single sentence in which he has allowed his feelings to get the better of his judgment, or to give a false coloring to those incidents in the life of Keshub Chunder Sen which not a few regard as dark spots in his career. From beginning to end the correctness of the delineation is unassailable, and the execution admirable."—Nov. 7th, 1887.

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